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# HUMAN CONFESSIONS

FRANK CRANE

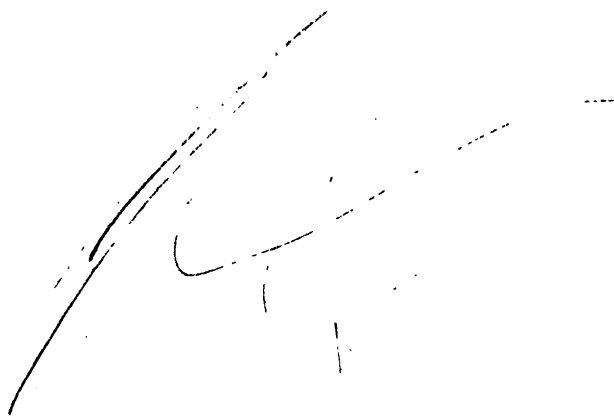
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FROM

Pres C. W. Eliot,  
Cambridge





## **HUMAN CONFESSIONS**



# HUMAN CONFESSIONS

BY

FRANK CRANE

"Leave me! there's something come into my thought  
That must and shall be sung high and aloof,  
Safe from the wolf's black jaw and the dull ass's hoof."  
BEN JONSON.



CHICAGO  
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1911

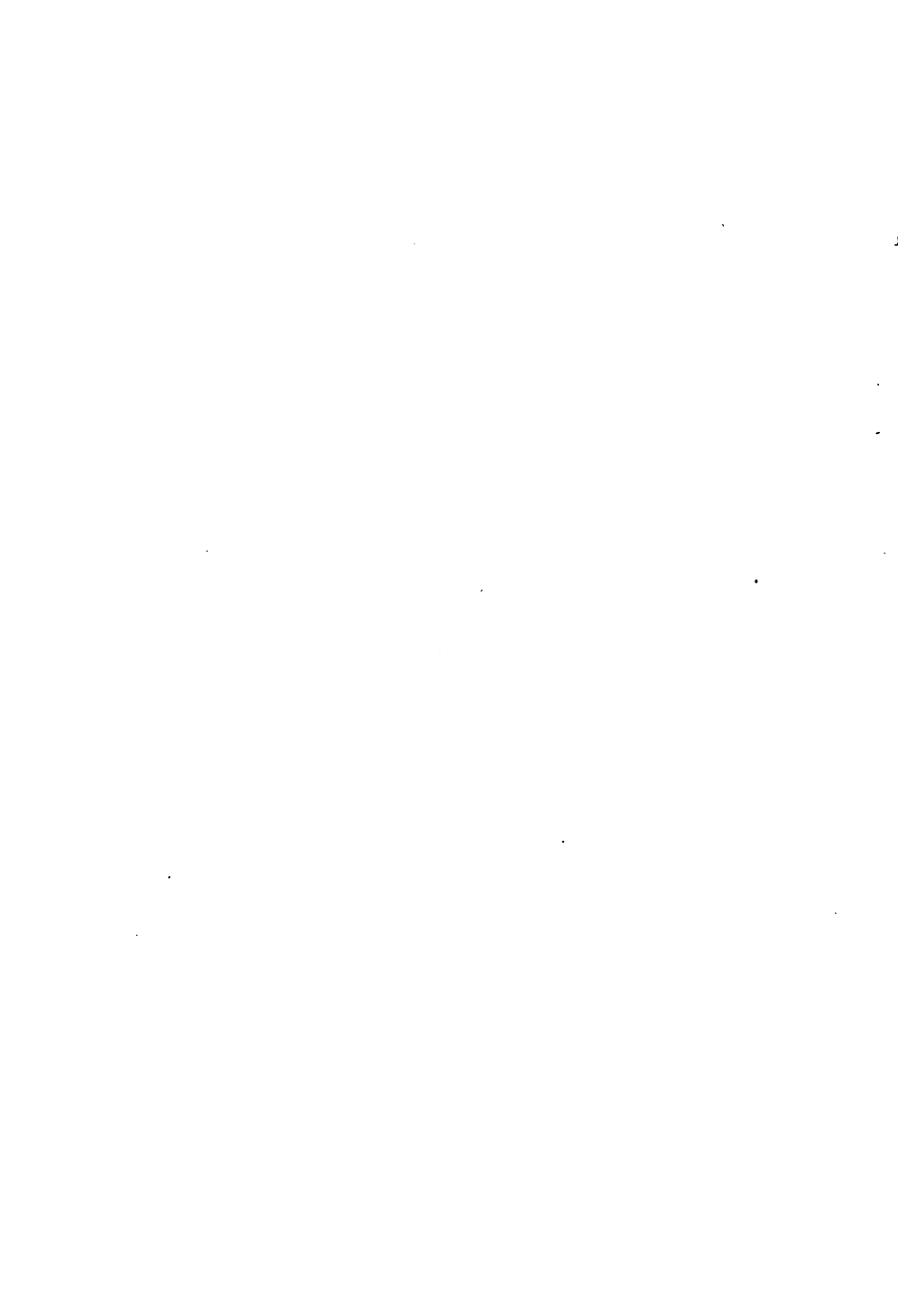


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**I** WOULD like these thoughts to be read and accepted in the sense of being purely human, reflecting no cult, college or creed. They are not written to convert anybody, or for any end except the pleasure of utterance.



# HUMAN CONFESSIONS

## TO YOU

**E**VERY speaker before an audience, every writer for publication — in short, every one who addresses the people generally — has some sort of ideal personage toward whom he aims. I will tell you mine.

My reader, who is before my mind's eye in every utterance I make, is a man who is old enough to have suffered, and still young enough to have faith.

He does not read to acquire information, but to find something that shall stimulate his own thought and feeling. Hence it is a matter of indifference to him whether he agrees with me. He wants me to interest him — not to soothe him.

He values various institutions, such as parties, churches, classes and the like, but he never allows them to interfere with the freedom of his mind.

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I am not to him a friend nor an enemy, a teacher, a preacher, nor an antagonist: I am a chance acquaintance whom he will consort with only so long as he can get anything worth while from me. He honors my position as a bystander.

He is offended only at these things: vulgarity, flippancy, intolerance, platitudes, insincerity, a desire to please him, repetition, too many words.

He wants me to be unafraid, gentle, honest; to say what is my own genuine private opinion, to say it as concisely as possible.

Sometimes he marks a book and sends it to a friend.

Oh, reader, "whom having not seen I love," the purest joy I know is to feel your eyes on my page, to feel your soul stir a little against my soul.

## DANGER

**R**IGHT by the side of every life is Danger. It is our invisible, ever-present companion. It is the tall, dark angel that Destiny appoints us to make our character. It is the one thing we avoid. It is the one thing we need. Wherever you find any form of life, whether fishes, birds, worms, insects, plants or human beings, there is the immanence of wounds, disease and death. Existence itself is "the valley of the shadow of death." And this forces upon us the conclusion that Nature cares very little for our safety and very much for the quality of our fiber. She does not mind if we die or are hurt, but she is anxious to keep up our courage. The air is full of microbes; our food swarms with germs; our blood and our environment are thick with things to corrupt our morals. The way from the cradle to the grave is past a thousand batteries. And at last some marksman gets us. Nature intends us to die. And you will miss the whole meaning of life if you do not learn that the true aim is not at all

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to escape pain, to be "saved" from this or that, but it is simply *not to be afraid*. The overcoming of fear is the enfranchisement of the soul. "To him that overcometh I will give the Morning Star." "Oh, toiling hands of mortals!" says Robert Louis Stevenson, "Oh, unwearied feet, traveling ye know not whither! Little do ye know your own blessedness; for to travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive, and the true success is labor."

## SEPARATION

**E**VERY organization which is based upon the theory that its members are better than the rest of the world is essentially immoral. Whatever is exclusive is wrong. The end of segregation is always hypocrisy. The consummate flower of the "chosen people" was the Pharisee. The elect and illuminated few are humbugs. All goodness abides in the common mass of men, as all water comes from the ocean. The heart of the whole nation is truer and more to be trusted than the heart of any one saint. The world must be lovable, else The Book would not say: "For God so loved the world." The world is wiser than the wisest man; humanity speaks slowly, but there is finality and utter truth in its judgments. The world, all men and women, are happy. The only genuine happiness is that which is of the common lot. The staple joys, the everyday, usable, inexhaustible joys, that do not wear out, are those pleasures we have in common with every class of men. There is vastly more quickening and life,



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for instance, in the liquor that you get for nothing out of the kitchen faucet than in the kind that costs you five dollars a quart. And do you know why The People in their entirety are so good and wise and lovely and happy? It is a secret, but I will tell you. It is because The People are God's Other Self.

## THE AURA

**T**HE subtlest and most necessary pleasure is the giving of pleasure to another. It is of best quality when it is unconscious, and the pleasure we cause comes not from any deliberate intention to be agreeable, but is merely the forthputting of one's personality. Every soul is like a bit of radium, ceaselessly sending out dynamic rays. Around me is a highly electrified spiritual aura, a force of such a character that only another human being can be affected by it. Each other human being has a similar envelope of psychic exhalation. These various auras have their attractions and repulsions. By my presence some are repelled, some remain cold and some are excited into a pleasurable glow. When another person is enkindled by me he loves me. If I am not enkindled in return, his love dies by and by. Souls feed on souls. Where there is a constant interplay of personality-force there is abiding love. To live in contact with a soul you love, is to glow in the serenest and sweetest type of joy. There is no marriage except there

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be this mutual radiation. Jesus touched the psychological gist of friendship and love when he said: "If ye abide in me, and I in you."

## THE WORLD'S GREATEST NEED

**I**F I were omnipotent and wanted to do the very best thing possible for humanity there are several things I would certainly not do. I would not give everybody money, for if each of us had a million dollars we would all be no better off than we are now. I would not give the world a perfect system of government, for good laws work mischief with bad subjects. I would not abolish sickness and the passing of life, for we learn more about the higher values of life from these two than from any other sources. I would not reveal at once all the secrets of science which normally it will require centuries to discover, for the best part of knowledge is the search for it. I would not disclose now all the useful inventions to be made in the next thousand years, for inventions do not come till the race is ready for them.

What I would do is this: I would send into the world a great, wise, sweet and most manly man and let him stay just long enough for a few to fall in love with him and to get a firm impression of

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his character. His fame would surely spread through generations; we should love and adore him, and grow gradually like him. Thus, it seems to me, I should do the most good and the least harm.

## THE SKY

**A**LWAYS above our huge moiling city is the still sky. The sky clasps the restless earth in its arms as a mother holds a fretful child to her bosom. Just to look up is to receive a revelation of the vast quietude in which our noisy world floats. I would have my life like Ruysdael's picture of "A Distant View of Haarlem," where there are some six inches of landscape and eighteen inches of sky. The more of that infinite azure we can get into our feeling, the more we let it top and dominate the little present, the nobler shall we be. It is when we look down and about us, and are absorbed in the petty business and schemes of the moment, that we despair and call ourselves worms of the dust. But when we raise our eyes to that miracle of majesty above, sometimes of gentlest unflecked blue, sometimes dotted with flocks of lamblike clouds, now thick and close with mist, and again remotely dark, sown with twinkling worlds, now full of rushing war-clouds, booming thunders, and fierce, swift lightnings, and then soft and ten-

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der and still as the holy adoration of a nun; never the same for two hours together, but always so wide and wonderful and great; when we regard this "majestical roof" of the theater to which our lives are appointed we are moved to play the man. I wish it might be said of me: "The stars have merged into his soul."

## THE REFORMER

**A** VAST deal of unhappiness might be avoided if people would grasp the truth that marriage is not a reformatory institution. Much also would be added to the sum of human joy if we would cease using friendships as a means of improving our friends. Our affections are too serious, too precious, to be degraded to the level of moral purpose. To spread whatever peculiar gospel we may be burning with may be a very noble business, but plain love is good in itself, and to sacrifice it on any altar, however holy, is to destroy what everybody and God know is good, for some end about which doctors disagree.

Friends are to be prized for what they are, and not for what they are not. The woman who does not love her husband's faults does not love him, but some phantom of her own creation. If I love you I do not want you made over, revised and amended to suit my notion of what you ought to be; I want you just as you are, and it is doubtful if I can love you so much when you get to heaven and lose all your human imperfections.



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If we must do good to folks, if we feel it is our bounden duty to uplift somebody and rescue the perishing, let us by all means spare our loved ones and go out and uplift some disagreeable people. And, after all, when will we learn that the mightiest influence we can exert comes from what we are and not from what we do or say? If you are anything you cannot keep your friend from becoming like you. And if you are not, why preach? "What you are," said Emerson, "talks so loud I cannot hear what you say."

## COMMERCIALISM

**I**T is the fashion to curse our day because it is given up to money-making. Cold, hard commercialism is said to be destroying the good old customs and graces. As a matter of fact, the business of money-making is the most civilized occupation the race ever took up. Commercialism has ended slavery, abated war, limited and abolished thrones and tyranny, ousted superstition, and developed the individual virtues of self-control, economy and sobriety. Compare it with feudalism, it is less picturesque but more merciful; with aristocracy, it has less display but more justice; with religious rule, it has less emotion but more liberty. Trusts may be as greedy and godless as any form of special privilege that ever oppressed man, but there is this to say of them: they can as a rule thrive only upon the prosperity and never upon the poverty of the masses. It is the rising importance of profit-getting that is the severest practical check upon militarism. As an institution money-making must play fair in the long run or

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it will destroy itself; no business house can continue on any permanent basis except truth-telling. Compare this with the ancient frauds and sacred, protected, legalized injustice of the hereditary nobility. When we shall have once worked out some feasible plan for justly distributing profits, when we shall have done away with all special advantages to certain people, including tariff and inheritance, we shall find universal working for wages the most equitable arrangement under which the race can live; we shall achieve the true brotherhood of man.

## THE PARADOX

**O**NE of the strange things about life is that the things we struggle and pray for often prove empty and disappointing when we get them, and the things we dread often unfold, when they arrive, and disclose the greatest treasures. We shun sickness, for instance; it comes, let us say, in spite of us; and we emerge from our sickroom as they who have visited the temple, for we have learned wonderful, ethereal facts about ourselves we never would have suspected in good health.

Weakness, poverty, failure, disappointment, heart-break, bereavement — these are somehow forms which the Highest Truth about life seems to take. I suppose the realization (not the knowledge) of God is about the supremest human experience; and it is significant that we never seem to feel the touch of God except in some sort of shadow. The loveliest grace of any man or woman is real humility; near and akin to this are loyalty and courage. And these virtues are rarely visible in a life until it is crushed and bruised by

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the hammers of adversity. The noblest force entered the human race through the Cross. The stricken man, finding all gone he longed for — health, fortune, friends — discovers himself miraculously recompensed; in the heart of sorrow is a surprising joy.

When Socrates had been condemned to death he was discussing with his friends the singular fact that his “daimon,” or familiar spirit, which had heretofore warned him of every approaching calamity, had given him no warning of death. “What, then, do you suppose to be the reason of this?” he said. “I will tell you. I think it is that what is about to happen to me is a good thing; and we must have been mistaken when we supposed death to be an evil.”

## LIFE AND LOVE

**A**FTER all there is only one thing in which we are all interested; it is — life. All our various forms of activity are experiments in life. Whether we eat, drink or sleep, go to the play or to the church, gratify or deny ourselves, laugh or weep, it is all to get another flavor of life. The sinners are the overcurious. Children are profligates with life. Old age will cling to it through any pain.

“Gnaw my withers, rack my bones!  
Life, mere life, for all atones.”

That is why we love love. It is because love is the very essence and pure substance of life. All else is diluted. The activities of business, the musings of philosophy, the ecstasies of religion, the thrill of adventure, the stir of exercise, the gratification of the senses, all of these are but brilliant beads strung on the one scarlet string of love. Without love they would fall from us. All about us, in the sea and on the land, nature

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pours her abundance of living things, every crevice has its habitant, and green things growing crowd the earth. We get a glimpse of what it all means when we love, for then nothing but a universe drenched with life can express us. "There is one word," wrote Maurice de Guerin, "which is the God of my imagination, the tyrant, I ought rather to say, that fascinates it, lures it onward, and will finally carry it I know not where; the word — life."

## FAITH

**T**O get things done an ounce of faith is worth a ton of experience. Kipling recounts how a battle was won by the fool raw recruits, the boys who stormed the fort like lunatics, while the old and wise soldiers knew better and held back.

William Carey, the father of modern missions, was called a "dreamer who dreams that he is dreaming." The movement he inaugurated is one of the marvels of human achievement. He had something better than wisdom; he had faith.

There are plenty of people to do the possible; you can hire them at forty dollars a month. The prizes are for those who perform the impossible. If a thing can be done, experience and skill can do it; if a thing cannot be done, only faith can do it.

And it is the quality of faith that counts. It is not of so much importance what you believe as how you believe. For faith is the peculiar elixir of youth. When we grow old, and accumulate experience, and learn our limitations, and become wise and cautious, Nature kindly removes us as



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being of no further use for her mysterious purposes. Whoever has faith is young, no matter how old he is; whoever has lost faith is old even at twenty-one.

“ So nigh is grandeur to our dust,  
So near is God to man,  
When duty whispers low, Thou Must!  
The youth replies, I can! ”

## CARRYING THE LANTERN BEHIND THEM

**E**VERY great soul threading the tangled ways of life makes more contentment for others than he gets for himself. In fact most of the comfortable things of existence are given us by others; most thorns and tragedies are of our own preparation. A myriad unseen hands labor in fields and mines, sail ships and handle trains to bring to my table bread and salt, knife and meat, to put coals in my grate and a coat on my back; but it is I alone who fare forth to sin or to pray, to fall or to triumph.

Every day I take the usufruct of Socrates's wisdom, of Washington's patriotism, of Jesus's teaching. These things descend upon me quiet as dew, and refreshing and calmly wholesome. They protect, cheer and strengthen me. And then how little of all this gentle good these benefactors got for their own comfort! When I consider the Heroes, who overturned ancient frauds, broke tyrannies and lightened the souls in darkness, I am

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reminded of the lines in Dante's Purgatory, where Statius says to Vergil: "Thou art like one who walks by night, carrying a lantern behind him, so that he gets no good from it himself, but helps those who follow."

## THE WASTE OF HATE

**T**HERE is so much waste in hate. I have a letter from a man who does not like me. He has read some articles of mine and thoroughly disapproves of them and of me. His ire reached to the point where he simply had to tell me how he thought I was doing harm and cumbering the ground generally.

Now the odd thing about it is that if this man and I — and I do not know him — were alone on an Atlantic liner, and got acquainted, and swapped stories and compared opinions, we should beyond a doubt grow quite chummy. “Don’t introduce me to that man,” said Sydney Smith once; “I feel it my duty to hate him, and you can’t hate a man when you know him.”

As a matter of fact, we never hate men. The human soul, any soul, is so intrinsically lovely that to get acquainted is to fall in love. That is the reason God “so loves the world”; it is because He knows souls through and through.

What we really hate are classes, opinions, castes,

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groups and such like appanages of men. Hate runs between Jew and Gentile, Catholic and Protestant, Capital and Labor, White and Black, and so on. But the whole business rests upon ignorance, ignorance of the real man through overknowledge of the pigeonhole in which he belongs.

I suppose there is some good in organizations, sects and shibboleths, but I love humanity so, I am so anxious to reach man, that I am impatient at all the cases, hoods and houses he has made for his defense.

Hate is waste. It is a by-product of generalization. To classify men is to lay the ground for hate. As long as we keep our eye on the individual we shall love.

## SELF-EXPRESSION

**T**HE best thing for you is self-expression. The way to develop what is good in you and the way to cure what is bad in you is to let it out. Many deadly microbes are ripened in the mind by lack of ventilation.

If you are nervous, go out in the back yard and scream. A child cries, and gets over it; we suppress, and remain gloomy. If you are angry against a man, write him a letter and abuse him and his ancestors, say every mean thing you can think of, and then burn the letter. Especially in the realm of art self-expression is the one virtue. All that is good in your painting, your statue, your book, your acting, your oratory is what of self you put in.

The world is, at the last, interested in what you are, and cares little for anything you have picked up. All your knowledge and your tricks and quotations are chaff. Your sole contribution to the sum of things is yourself. You can do what is in you, no more, no less. Education and culture

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do merely "cast up the highway and gather up the stones" so that this self may run free and not stumble.

Most people, ordinary folks, are clogged with fear, imitation, stage fright, and are perpetually smothered by others; the genius, the artist and the wise man are those whose self flows naturally and unafraid. All we can add to the wealth of humanity is merely the expression of our own personality. And fear not, neither of offending God nor wronging man; for —

"To thine own self be true,  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

## BETWEEN ONE MAN AND ONE WOMAN

**T**HE penalty for uncleanness of thought is that the soul's eye shall be put out. In some way Nature has placed in the holy of holies of life the ark of the covenant between one man and one woman. It is a great mystery, but it is a truth none the less, this subtle connection between spiritual vision and sexual integrity.

The high joy of existence is precisely the ability to see those rare tints of nobility and glory that hover about the commonplace. To perceive these gleams makes our career here below strong, rich and worth while; not to perceive them, to have lost them, to doubt or to deny them, is to reduce life to the level of that Augustan age, of which Matthew Arnold wrote:

“On that hard pagan world disgust  
And secret loathing fell;  
Deep weariness and sated lust  
Made human life a hell.”



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Purity seems a cold word, but it is only so to stupid persons who do not understand how passion can be pure. Ignorance is not purity, and celibacy is not chastity. Our wives and mothers are as chaste as our daughters. Purity is a quality of passion. To have passion without loyalty is, as Carlyle says, "to burn away, in mad waste, the divine aromas and plainly celestial elements from our existence; to make the soul itself hard, impious and barren, and to forfeit the finest magnanimity, depth of insight and spiritual potency." Or, as a greater than Carlyle said: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God!"

## WIGWAGGING

“**T**HAT man,” said Voltaire, “who shall explain why the emotion of pleasure causes the zygomatic muscle to draw the corners of the mouth up toward the ears may indeed be entitled to call himself a philosopher.” But the problem is not so hard. One spirit is signaling another by a code mutually agreed upon, as one man-of-war wigwags to another. A strange, hidden thing, this

“Animula, vagula, blandula,  
Hospes comesque corporis,

— this vague guest and comrade of the body we call the soul.” None has seen the real Me. Everyone is really a concealed ghost. I look at you, as one gazes at a house from the street and wonders who is within. Your eyes are windows. Sometimes you light the lamp, the windows shine, I know you are happy. Shall I ever see You? Shall I ever know You, and not merely guess at you by lips and hair and hands? Now we talk as one in Chicago telephones to one in Boston, we

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love as dwellers upon the mountain catch the fragrance of flowers in the valley. You escape me. We walk hand in hand, but You may be for all that in Cathay or Ispahan. Eye looks into eye, but the deep secrets of the soul lie covered. Poor, little, solitary soul, caged in this body, hearing bird calls in the distance, but never really knowing its kind! Happy is the man who once or twice can say, in the press of alien lives, "Some one hath touched me!"

## THE SOIL OF HEROISM

**T**HIS is the age of heroes. Because it is the age of money-power, public corruption, luxury, greed, and vast, deadening respectabilities. Only where you find the solidarities of society massed against the pure, aspiring soul do you find great souls. Battle makes brave men, danger makes fearless men, terrible temptation develops noble women. Unjust social conditions, poverty and unrighteous wealth are the muck soil where grow the most beautiful flowers of individual altruism. If the millennium ever comes in which wealth will be distributed in equity and all the environment of men will be conducive to virtue we shall have only a race of childlike innocents. The eras of great wrong are the eras of noble, virile, forth-putting souls. Our friend the devil may mow down the weak as grass, but he can only nourish those who have the fiber of greatness. I am not so bold as to fancy that I can solve what Archbishop Whately called "the problem of the ages"—that is, the reason for the existence of

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evil; but certain it is that some light is thrown upon it when we assume that human beings are not put here to be happy, but to become great.

## THE FRIENDSHIP OF WOMEN

**A**S a rule the more intellectual men are fond of the society of women. Women are appreciative, consequently they are more stimulative than men. But besides their appreciativeness they have another force in them that is a tonic to men. The strong wine of sex-attraction, when thinned somewhat by the distances of social usage, and strained through the bars of convention, is one of the rarest moral and mental tonics to masculine minds.

The most useful friends of the artist, the poet and the public speaker are feminine. For woman is never impersonal; she always sees the man behind his work, and that is the kind of critic a man needs. But that does not explain her power, which is altogether mysterious. She is different. She has the transfiguring radio-active dynamic. She has the Ithuriel wand. She has the gift of rainbows. The prohibitionists ought to expel her from their party, for she is the original intoxicant. She is dangerous, as religion and play and all good

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things are dangerous. (The only things that are always perfectly harmless are the things that are useless.) And then women are not stewed, soaked, stuffed and saturated with money-making, which renders the average man a bore.

Wrote Thackeray to his nephew: "I pray sincerely that you may always have a woman for a friend. Make yourself a lady's man as much as ever you can."

## YOUTH ETERNAL

**T**HE earth was just as lively in spring when Chaucer sung of April and his showers sweet, the leaves were just as young and tender and the dewy freshness lay just as heavenly on the primrose when Wordsworth rose early and walked by the lake, and birds in Cæsar's day built their nests in hopes as greening and sang their surprise of day in joy as wild and new as now.

To-day I see young people exuberant around me and the sun boiling up in dawns of promise, and seeds sprouting, and myriads of things commencing; and I reflect how old the earth is, and think of castles I have seen crumbling, and of gnawed, gray monuments, and of empty tombs; and I marvel at the abiding youngness of the world and of humanity. The boys and girls of Chicago are as much interested in themselves as the boys and girls of Athens in Pericles' day were interested in themselves.

Why does not the world wear out and grow tired and old? Whence comes this exhaustless



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liquor of youth that runs through the veins of men and trees? Go and tell this miracle to Sirius and to Arcturus, that here rolls a strange planet which buries its men and its forests, making history of one and coal of the other, and still keeps eternally young!

## LOVE MILITANT

**I**F love be the greatest thing in the world then the first of all moral obligations is to be lovable. And as a matter of fact lovableness is our most militant quality. Uprightness, purity, truth, temperance and wisdom are all good, but are defensive, self-preserving virtues; lovableness is aggressive and conquering. The former build the walls and strengthen the foundations of our religion; the latter sallies forth and brings in captives. Toward faith and righteousness and all other ingredients of our creed there are infidels, but toward amiability there is no infidel. Lovableness is the one grace that must be genuine; we can pretend honesty and piety, but lovableness is the very flavor of our personality; it lies beneath the will, it is the quality of our subconscious self. It does not depend upon a handsome face nor any such thing; it is to move through the world a center of cheer and hope, a point of joy and rest. How can one obtain this charm if it is not to be got by the will? By coming under the influence

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of some lovable soul we are changed as iron is magnetized by iron. So that, at bottom, the whole problem of the propagation of real Christianity is the problem of the spread of personal influence. The Kingdom of Heaven is "like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."

## GROWTH OF IDEALS

**O**UR ideals ought to grow along with the rest of our nature. It is as bad not to allow our convictions to develop as it is to have no convictions. Nothing is so dangerous as an out-grown conviction. There can be no beauty in a life that is loyal to something it suspects may be untrue.

The reactionaries are more dangerous than the sinners. For sinners only encumber progress: reactionaries oppose it. Revolutions are due to conservatives. Humanity can carry along its rebels and weaklings; it has to kill off the stand-patters.

We have then a double duty: to be loyal to our ideal, and to be ready to follow it when it advances into something better, as it ought to do by the unfolding of our knowledge, the deepening of our love, the widening of our outlook — in fine, the normal growth of our heart and mind.

There is no short and easy road to a noble and intelligent goodness. There is no simple set of

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rules to be learned once for all; there is no "do-this-and-live" pill. To be good calls for the greatest effort, daily recurring, for perpetual readjustment, for the coöperation of all our wisdom, experience and feeling. For to be good simply means to live our lives to the full. The greatest Master of morals said that if anyone would follow Him he must take up his cross daily.

## WATER

**T**HERE is a time and place for everything, and sin consists in doing a thing at the wrong place or time. Thus it is quite as sinful to sing a gospel hymn or use the name of Deity at a ball game as it is to laugh and yell in church.

I love Bohemianism, Free Thought and Unconventionality, but I loathe these things when they are taken to mean uncleanness, slovenliness and irresponsibility.

The Creator had a great moral purpose in making the surface of the globe three-fourths water. The object was to have plenty wherewith to wash the other fourth.

In the world of ideas also three-fourths are water. That is, there are great cleansing, purging, disinfecting thoughts and feelings. Our moral and intellectual health depends upon the frequency with which we bathe in these. They are work, greatest of all spiritual detergents; and play, almost as great; besides some others.

It is because all children play and most grown

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people work for a living that the race remains healthy-minded and true-hearted.

Mental and moral diseases come from the tramps (the idle poor) and the smart set (the idle rich) and the religious fanatics (the morally playless) and from the sporting people (the morally workless).

## SOLITUDE

**W**ITHOUT bitterness or sourness or egoism we ought to recognize that the nearer we come to wisdom the more we become isolated. The closer we approach truth and perfect goodness the narrower and lonelier the way. It is easy for this reflection to trail off into a sickly sentiment, but there is a truth in it that is not at all mawkish, but virile and full of contentment.

The point of religious ecstasy in any faith is always found as a personal and secret revelation. Whether I reach this at mass or at the mourners' bench, among the hallelujahs of the crowd or in a narrow cell, still it is all mine. The soul must be alone to find God.

So of wisdom: when we say experience is the best teacher we mean that there is no real knowledge except that which one finds alone. No truth thrills us with its discovery unless truth and we meet without bystanders, in solemn tryst of two.

No living man ever had enough self-respect. Egotism is different; that is a desire to stand well



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in others' eyes, while self-respect is — to stand well in one's own eyes.

It is as bad to let other people select your opinions, tastes and convictions as it is to allow them to select your wife. To be sure, one should be open to reason and be teachable, but the last supreme court sits in the center of one's own heart and mind.

With charity to all, without pride, humbly and reverently I take my place beside myself as against the world. For better or for worse I must love whom I love, think what I think, believe what I believe. I accept the full accountability. That Judge behind the stars may find me sinful, will find me weak, but at least He will have to know that what faith and love I have toward Him are as genuine as my sins. Not in defiance, but in respectful, serious acceptance of the charge He has put upon me, I repeat the fine lines of Henley:

“ It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishment the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate,  
I am the captain of my soul.”

“ Wisdom,” says Nietzsche, “ is the whisper of the soul to itself in the crowded marketplace.”

## COURAGE

**T**HE soul little suspects its own courage. We have had to tear men's bodies to pieces, to burn, crush, strangle and crucify them to find that last wonderful drop of courage. Take even a common man, the commonest, and beat and bruise him enough and you will see his soul rise God-like.

When men and devils, law and pitiless nature, have closed in upon the soul, and the enemy, triumphing, laughs, "At last I have him! He is mine!"—it is only then you may witness the miracle, Daniel sleeping in the lion's den, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego walking in the midst of the fire, having no hurt, and with them a fourth whose form is like the Son of God. These ancient tales be parables; the core of truth in them is the wonder of the soul's escape. The only calamity is surrender.

Nietzsche said: "Dir wird die Last des Lebens zu schwer? So musst du die Last deines Lebens vermehren! Wenn der Duldner endlich nach dem Flusse Lethe duerstet und sucht, so musst er zum

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Helden werden, um ihn geweiß zu finden — Is life's burden too heavy for you? Then you must increase your burden! When the sufferer at last thirsts for the River Lethe and seeks it, he must become a hero if he would be sure to find it."

## EDITING LIFE

**W**E edit ourselves too much. This is one of the subtle bad habits of an age of too much reading. We contract a literary self-consciousness. We do not think; we recollect what we have seen printed. We have no self-respect, but a sort of editorial valuation of how anything we propose to do will look on a page. This published or publishable self obscures the real self. The beginnings of a genuine emotion trail off into the passions of Lady Clara Vere de Vere. A personal opinion is scarcely born before it is kidnaped by Doctor Johnson. Ideas from type rain in upon the mind until it is inundated. We cannot even choose our own soap; for advertisers ding the merits of their soap into us from billboards, street-car roofs, blotters, electric signs and magazine leaves until we want their want.

But one's real self is vastly more interesting after all. And the only book worth while is the one that sets me to thinking. One glimpse of truth flashed up from the recesses of my own being

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is more vital to me than the Book of Proverbs. I must take frequent vacations from reading and steep my soul in its own wilderness, for my heart is wilder than any romance, more untrodden than any jungle, more bitter than Gorky, holier than Thomas à Kempis. I have never been to its North Pole nor scaled its Himalayas. "Few men," says Emerson, "find themselves before they die."

## THE DEFENDERS OF THE FAITH

**T**HE real "Defenders of the Faith" are the babies. These are they who furnish the fresh supplies of belief, hope, love and all the other virile ingredients of our religion. They come to the race of men like rain from the infinite and water our optimism. All churches, learned doctors and divines, organizations, missionaries, priests and books float on the tide: the tide itself is a deep and hidden power which moves in the instincts of men; and with every baby that is born a new impulse of this tidal dynamic is received.

The mediæval world worshiped a woman with a child in her arms. What mankind does for a thousand years must be profoundly true. Whatever our theological notions may be we must confess that somewhere in this miracle of a child on his mother's breast lies the holiest and most redemptive element among all the phenomena of the universe.

We touch the infinite at two points — birth and death: so birth and death have always been the chief priests of humanity.

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Christmas means divine childhood. The wisest men have always regarded the ideal life as something to be returned to, and not something toward which we go on. Jesus said: "Except ye turn and become as little children ye shall in nowise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."

When God gives us a child it is not that we may teach him, but that he may teach us. The wise mother seeks to develop her child's personality; the foolish mother would change it. The wise mother plays with her child and lets strangers instruct him; the foolish mother instructs her child and lets strangers play with him. The wise mother is good for her child's sake; the foolish mother wants her child to be good for her sake.

## COMMON STOCK

**T**HE fiction of hereditary greatness dies hard.

Leonardo da Vinci, the universal genius, was born out of wedlock. Goethe's son was a weakling. Napoleon's parents were insignificant. Abraham Lincoln's parents were poor and illiterate. Jesus came from a family of laborers by the day. There is only one genuinely great strain in human blood, the common strain. The Preferred Stock of the race is the Common Stock. The real rulers of men appear as wild flowers, growing in untilled land, blossoming on the highway. The plants in the royal hothouses, the Cæsars, Romanoffs, Hohenzollerns and Wettins, all grow spindling. The future Garibaldi or Milton is, as probably as not, reaching for cookies in your pantry at this moment. In greatness there is no heredity. We inherit characteristics, but not character. The quality we call greatness breaks out in a coal-heaver's family as often as in a ducal palace.

A man was trying to sell some puppies on a



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street corner. A passerby asked him: "What's the breed?"

"Half Boston bull," was the answer.

"What's the other half?"

"Oh, I don't know! That's just dog, I suppose."

The greatness in any man lies in the part of him that is "just man." In the ultimate struggle between man and man it is not family that counts, nor special gifts, nor talents, nor possessions; it is the race force, it is the amount of humanity he has.

## LIFE'S REAL OBJECT

**L**IFE," said a philosopher, "is a calculated refusal." What we want and get is but as a pebble by the shore of that ocean of things we wanted and did not get. Why are we put in a world where to desire means to suffer?

We are never going to begin to understand this until we settle first of all in our minds the question, To what purpose were we created? If to be happy merely, then life certainly is a cynic thing; for we miss so much by the way, and at the end are tumbled into the grave just as we have learned how to be happy.

But if we adopt the theory that we are put here, not to be happy, but to become great, then life's refusals become intelligent.

For if I hold true, all that befalls me, pain and pleasure, comedy and tragedy, success and failure, feeds my greatness. From the wounds and acids of life I gather prudence, patience, self-control, will power, equanimity and courage.

"All things work together for good" to those

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who have learned that there is something more worth while than happiness. "The stars in their courses fight against" all who think nature's last word is pleasure.

There is a strain of baseness in every philosophical system called hedonistic, that is, making pleasure one's chief aim; whether it be the low hedonism of Aristippus (bodily pleasure) or the higher hedonism of Epicurus (spiritual pleasure). Our faith is in a nobler Teacher whose sign is The Cross.

## OLD AGE AND FAITH

**I** CAN conceive of no more repellent thing than growing old. And there is no need of it.

There is a remedy against old age. It is — Faith. The old doctrine of “Justification by Faith” needs to be brought out, dusted, reshaped and put into use. Nothing can “save” one, even in the most modern sense, nothing can make and keep one well and strong and glad, except faith.

The only thing worth while is youth. The true elixir of everlasting youth is faith. “It is faith in something,” wrote Oliver Wendell Holmes, “enthusiasm for something, that makes life worth living.”

The old “believe and be saved” doctrine takes on a new and amazing significance in the light of the newest psychology. “Believe and be young,” we might now say.

For whoever believes in himself, in his fellow-men and in the Eternal Cosmic Goodness, is young even if sixty and bald; and whoever distrusts himself, doubts his neighbors, and regards

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the universe as a poker game or a steam engine is old even at twenty-one.

Deep in my own counsels I have the Key to things. I can make of this world a prison or a playground. The Key is my Will. I will believe, I will trust, I will defy despair unto the last; then under white hair my soul shall bloom as a red crocus in the snow; within my collapsing body my heart shall sing as a caged bird about to be free.

## SAINT VANITAS

**A** WORD of praise ought to be said for that most useful of human frailties — vanity. It is the maid-of-all-work that does most of the drudgery of souls, for which little-used moral qualities get the credit. For the bulk of our respectabilities and proprieties are due to sheer pride, and vanity is the best substitute for honesty, truthfulness and dignity of character. As in the case of silverware the plated article often is harder and wears better than the sterling. The kindly Creator usually endows defective persons with an over-supply of conceit as a merciful compensation. Most under-sized and physically deformed people are vain and touchy. Saint Vanitas is the patron saint of all who stand for a living upon raised places in public, including those who operate on the stage, the pulpit, the platform and the stump. Vanity is a great conserving power in society; for it has often been the only thing that has kept the boy from getting drunk, the girl from going wrong, the man from ruining his business and the

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woman from wrecking her home. Blessed, thrice blessed be pride which descends from heaven to perk up the boy with warts on his hands, the girl with nothing but a pretty face, and the fool business man slaving like a beast long after he has more than he needs! Even the doddering old man is not exempt from its unction, and as he talks vanity anoints him like "the ointment that ran down upon Aaron's beard even to the hem of his garment." We join with Thackeray in exclaiming, "Let us thank God for imparting to us, poor, weak mortals, the inestimable blessing of vanity!"

## THE IMPOSSIBLE

**O**NE of the axioms that are not true is "No one can perform the impossible." We can tell just what strain an iron bar can stand, and we can gauge precisely the force of steam; but when we come to the human being we find a paradox — a creature that does the impossible.

A tender woman, if she be gripped by some strong emotion, fright or eagerness to save her child, may suddenly become strong as a giant. When Stephenson proposed to run a steam car at forty miles an hour the world proved it could not be done; no one could live going so fast through the air. Yet he did the "impossible"! Fifty years ago it was impossible for a man to talk in Chicago and have his ordinary voice heard in New York: that is now done every day.

No man gets the ability to do an impossibility before he does it; the power comes with the effort. It is because of this law that moral obligations are binding.

The Bible is full of commands, the doing of



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which is beyond us. Who can keep the Ten Commandments or the precepts of Jesus? Only those can perform these duties who perform them. Power settles on us as we try.

Jesus told the palsied man to stretch out his arm. He could not; but he did; power entered as he acted. The multitude was fed on a few loaves and fishes; enough provision was not made beforehand, but the supply was increased as it was given.

"Responsibility," said Horace Bushnell, "is not measured by ability." The half of strength is faith.

## PLUNGING INTO HAPPINESS

**E**VERY good inheritance has its mixture of evil. Every virtue we draw from our potent ancestry carries with it a drop or two of their vices. I suppose there is no set of forefathers more to be proud of than the Puritans. They had a tremendous moral dynamic. But they had one peculiar taint. They were afraid of happiness. You recall Macaulay's gibe, that the Puritans objected to bear-baiting not so much because it gave pain to the bears as because it gave pleasure to the spectators.

And possibly it is well to suspect happiness, which is often a mark of thoughtlessness and sometimes a mask of cruelty or cowardice. And I by no means hold happiness to be the last word in souls. But for all that we ought to discriminate; for joy is set in the nature of things, and we ought at least to think it innocent until it be proven guilty.

I know people who dare not let themselves go in times of joy; they are fearful something evil will

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happen. Because life is alternately light and shade they are suspicious of light. A run of luck seems to them a warning. When love comes they dare not trust, for fear of disillusion. When they say they are well and content they knock on wood.

The great loveliness and sunshine of children come from their unreserved plunge into happiness, when they find it. God bless them! and every childlike soul! as Dante writes:

“ L'anima semplicetta, che sa nulla,  
Salvo che, mossa da lieto fattore,  
Volontier torna a cio che la trastulla:

— the dear, simple soul, who knows nothing save that, sprung from a joyous Maker, she turns gladly to that which gives delight.”

## THE PHILISTINES

THE name changes, the thing is always with us. There is a word of the street that fascinates me. It is "dub." It is a delicious confection, a naïve and apt description of a type of person that diuturnally infests the race. The French call him an *epicier* (grocer), which carries with it a peculiar Gallic slur. The Germans use the epithet *Philister*. Arnold adopts this word and defines philistines as "humdrum people, slaves to routine, enemies to light; stupid and oppressive, but at the same time very strong." And, oh, how strong they are! The females are arbiters of society, the dull torment of children, extinguishers by asphyxiation of the home. The males, like soggy lumps of human dough, hold down great wealth, clog pulpits, spread over into books, obstipate the teaching profession, enfarce all presidencies and chairmanships, and altogether render this sublunary globe a sheet of sticky fly-paper wherein agile and adventurous souls are caught, wriggle and die. The one god they know and

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worship is Success. It is they who dig the graves for genius; it is they who afterward erect the monument. Young man, if you would get on, buy a house and lot in Boetia and learn to love insulsity.

## SOMETHING ELSE

**W**HAT is man's greatest good? A question which has been variously answered by the philosophies and by the religions of all time. The Buddhist, for instance, holds before us the rooting out of all desire, and likewise the Greek Stoics considered all emotions diseases of the soul and recommended utter equanimity; the hedonists of all sorts, on the contrary, from Epicurus to the latest religious faddist, set forth pleasure of one kind or another as our chief aim. So practically those you meet will answer in different ways; one will say "The chief end of man is to glorify God," as found in the catechism; another will confess his object is to get money; another, to be comfortable; another, to have a good time; another, to do one's duty, and so on. Out of all this swirl of opinion there is creeping up into the modern mind the feeling that the truest good of any man may be found in the phrase, not lightly but seriously taken, "to live your own life."

Neither happiness nor the trampling under foot

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of happiness can satisfy. Tannhäuser could not bear his lot in the lap of Venus: he hungered for human strife and tears. And no man could stand perfect bliss. Neither could a man endure unrelieved sorrow. The fact is, the human soul is omnivorous and must needs feed on sweet and bitter herbs, and must eat its moral flesh, fish and salt.

Our life is incomplete without both joy and sorrow. The chief want of life is something else. So the most normal life is composed of a little pain and a little pleasure, some content and some remorse, love and hate, triumph and despair, waking and sleeping, business and rest, certainty and mystery, passion and indifference; in short the greatest good is to be found in taking things as they come, with a healthy digestion that transforms experience into character.

There is sound sense in the exclamation, "It's all in a lifetime!" The Christian says, "All things work together for good." And the self-same thought is naïvely turned by Robert Louis Stevenson:

"The world is so full of a number of things,  
I am sure we should all be as happy as kings."

## WHO PAID TOLSTOY?

**T**HERE is a vast deal being said by the alleged friends of humanity to-day about justice. Labor champions declare they seek not charity nor sympathy, but simply a square deal. "We will get justice," one of them recently exclaimed, "but by our own efforts. The campaign shall be waged in the press, on the platform, at the polling booth; if need be, on the stricken field! We will win our rights and by our own efforts secure a just world as between man and man."

A right manly, brave-sounding declaration! But it is only half true. Justice is a fine word, but it is not the last word between man and man. To so order the world that every man receive his due wage would not bring the millennium. For we are not born equal; we may be "equal before the law," but we are unequal before nature and the world's work. Justice would have nothing to say why the strong should not take from the weak, nor why the wise should help the simple.

Another, and a wholly mysterious word, shines



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above justice as the sun above the moon. It is love. Above all earth's equities looms this super-equity. Above all work done for fair pay towers the work done for no pay at all — just for love.

Who pays the mother for her long night-vigils, and the father for his toil for his offspring, and the wife for her sacrifices, and the soldier for his wounds, and the hero for giving up his life to rescue another? Who paid Jesus for His agony, and Regulus for his patriotism, and Walt Whitman for his poetry, and William Morris and William Booth for their labors toward social betterment?

It is not a just distribution of goods the human race needs so much as it needs a loving esteem of one another.

For who paid this old man, striving in the heart of a merciless monarchy for the uplift of his brother men, excommunicated and anathematized by the official representatives of that Christ who was his passion, staggering forth at last to die alone, crazed by the burden of the world's sorrow?

Who paid Tolstoy?

## THE CHURCH

**I** WONDER if I will be tolerated if I say what church I want to join? I belong to a church now and expect to remain in it. That is because the one I want to join is not — yet.

My ideal church is called The Church of the Greatest Common Divisor. If you take the historic Christian churches and examine them you will find there is a certain part of their creed and feeling and practice common to all. That is the essential, livable part of each. What each sect has peculiar to itself does not appeal to me. I cling to my own church not for that which distinguishes it from the others, but for the sake of that which it shares with them.

Inside of this Greatest Common Divisor grow all the sweet flowers of the religious feeling. Outside are its baptized animosities. Ask priest or preacher, Pope or Salvation Army lassie, Christian Scientist or Presbyterian, if it is better to do right than wrong, better to pray than to be godless, better to be pure, true, loving, honest and humble

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than to be unclean, false, hateful, crooked and proud; and from all you will get a " Yes " and an " Amen."

I am not opposed to the sects. I am for them. There is something in each that I want. I do not say all are equally right, but I say that the Greatest Common Divisor of all is right.

## KNOWLEDGE

**I**T is not the victory but the fight that is worth while. It is to be doubted whether education-made-easy is of much use. Knowledge is of no intrinsic value; its value lies wholly in the exercise it takes to acquire it. A meal you walk to is worth twice as much as a meal that is brought you. Shakespeare never saw an English grammar; they quarry grammars out of Shakespeare. Maupassant never took lessons in short-story writing. Napoleon and Cromwell, two of the wisest governors, passed through no college course in the science of government. Universities and libraries have their dangers; they are careless mothers and smother as many babes as they rear. Savages have neither indigestion nor knowledge of hygiene, because they have to run for every bite. People began to have bad teeth with the invention of mush. Knowledge we may gather from study; wisdom comes only from experience. Philosophy we may learn from books; common sense (which is usable philosophy) we learn from folks. This was the

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wisdom of Lincoln; every item of it he had grubbed out as he grubbed out scrub-oak stumps. Such wisdom is disconcerting, irritating to much-read men, because it is so bluntly self-evident and plain. "In Lincoln," said Dana, "we get an idea how superior is that intellectual faculty which sees the vitality of a question and knows how to state it."

## OUR KIND OF FOLKS

“**O**UR kind of folks,”—God bless them! We shoulder our way through a crowded world. Most we meet are indifferent. They would perhaps lift an eyebrow if we should die. Some are hostile, actively or passively. But the hundredth man is glad because of us. When he remembers we exist, his eye kindles, his heart makes music. I met a man the other day on the train. He got on at Chicago and off at Rock Island. He came, like Halley’s comet, out of the infinite, glowed a little in my sun, and was off again on his orbit. I passed three words with a woman in Munich on a street car. She, too, has disappeared forever. But she had the elective look. Who can fathom the strange law of repulsion and attraction in personalities? It is not in blood. Our relations bore us; a stranger inspires us.

I wonder if heaven will not be a re-grouping of people? Is not the criminal simply one who is grouped wrong? George Eliot wrote of “the

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choir invisible"; a fine phrase, but she shaded it off into a platitude when she went on to say it is composed of the grand and lofty souls. For the essence of a choir is harmony. They should not all be soloists. I do not want great, vast, majestic souls around all the time, but just "our kind of folks," who wink at my great weakness and praise my little goodness, and laugh at my jokes.

## TO THE UNBORN

**H**ERE'S a draft of thought to the unborn! Dim shades, thin mists, they approach us from the sky of the future, forever advancing, becoming. They are more truly ourselves than we are. They are ourselves distilled, sublimated.

All our highest labor is for them. For them we are slowly perfecting cities, smoothing the country roads, planting trees, founding and endowing institutions. It is for ourselves we do the menial work of getting food and clothes and luxuries; it is for them all great poetry is written, all unselfish heroism performed. Once we were of their number; and as thin clouds condense and become raindrops so we pattered into existence.

They are our deepest kin, though they have not yet begun. What we are depends upon them. In them are the springs of our highest convictions. These non-existent myriads beckon us with what persistent pleading, with how beseeching eyes, praying us to be great!

What they shall be depends upon us. It has



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been said that the Chinese are slaves to their ancestors and Americans are slaves to their posterity. And, truly, does any voice from the past equal the voice from the unborn? It calls us to truth and cleanness and loyalty, so that

“Sweeter shall the roses blow  
In those far years, those happier years;  
And children weep when we lie low  
Far fewer tears, far softer tears.”

## THE PEACE OF POISE

**T**HE Greek and the Hebrew fight in every one of us. It is the war between the beautiful and the good, between the joy of self-expression and the joy of self-denial, between the ecstasy of indulgence and the ecstasy of renunciation, between the love of nature as it is and the love of nature as it ought to be, between marvel at the wondrous universe as it is and marvel at the still more wondrous universe of our ideals.

On the one hand are youth, the overflowing cup of sex-dynamic, art, science, pleasure; on the other hand the lure of moral grandeur; here the charm of flowers and trees and green meadows, there the enchantment of white mountains, cold, inaccessible, ever calling. It is the conflict between culture and religion.

The man of sense will hope for peace in the triumph of neither contestant. When the religious emotions have their full way they land us in the barrenness of fanaticism. Oppositely, destroy the religious sentiment and you mutilate life.

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We must therefore maintain a balance between the two. Then we have peace, not the peace of stagnation, but the peace of poise, all the more true and valuable because it can be maintained only by vigilance.

## TALK

**A** MAN does not talk to tell what he knows; he talks to find out what he knows. This was Socrates's great discovery. A clear mental vision of any subject is not obtained by brooding over it, but by trying to express it. Doubt and confusion are best removed from the mind by finding a friend or an adversary and arguing. You may not know what you believe when you begin, but you will know when you end.

It is a mistake to suppose anyone knows, before he speaks, what he is going to say. He surprises himself quite as much as his hearers.

Every author is familiar with the paradox that the way to find anything to write about is to go to work and write about it.

The one who learns most is the teacher. If some way could be devised for pupils in the schools to do the teaching they would learn more.

La Rochefoucauld observed that "there is scarcely anyone who does not think more, in conversation, of what he is about to say than of an-

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swering precisely what is said to him. We can see in their eyes and minds a wandering from what we say, and an impatience to return to what they wish to say."

The reason of this is that the pleasure of conversation consists not in what you learn from the one with whom you converse, but in what you discover about yourself.

## EXPEDIENCY

**T**HE greatest enemy of truth is expediency. The moment a teacher asks what will be the effect of his utterance upon his hearers he is guilty of a subtle disloyalty to truth. The moment a prophet is influenced by any consideration of whether his message will please or displease them to whom he is sent he has lost his divine unction.

No man is utterly honest until he believes that the truth is always best. Honest preachers have no business with results. Parents are so often failures because they try to tell their children that which it is best for them to know. There is but one thing for men to do, and that is, having found the truth as nearly as they can, to live and to speak it, whether it curses or blesses. For truth is God, and whenever we undertake to trim it, to veil it, to alter it, so as not to harm some one, we have ceased to trust in God; we have become infidels, and have substituted our own judgment for the wisdom of the universe.

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Whoever teaches a thing he has ceased to believe, whoever assists in a propaganda that he is convinced is wrong, and all because he thinks such action is expedient and "for the best," such an one is fighting against the stars of heaven and has leagued himself with those who oppose the cosmic energy.

## OUTSIDE THE GATES

**T**HE praise of happiness is sung best by the miserable. How to attain virtue is best advised by those who have missed it. One who has these excellencies of soul knows little about them. Why should he? A man who has always had money knows nothing of its value. One who is never ill has no proper appreciation of health. Nothing we have can fire the imagination: it is the pang of the want of a thing that glorifies it. Criticism of clergymen who do not practice what they preach is unjust. No one can preach well what he practices perfectly. He is dull from unbroken goodness. It takes the fall, the remorse and shame, the agony and longing of imperfection to wring from the heart any eloquence for high and noble living. Not the contented lover whose affection is returned, but the hopeless lover, passion-wrecked, can paint the love that glows and burns. The Christian Scientist with a carbuncle reaches a point of passionate painlessness that the ordinary well person cannot know.



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Do not accuse me, then, of inconsistency if I, who am a spendthrift, extol the benefits of economy; if I, moody, gloomy and full of irony, depict the contentment of a calm, sweet, philosophic mind; if I, a failure, tell how to succeed; if I, a sinner, reveal to you the beauty of holiness. Only the soul outside the gates can realize the joys of the Holy City.

## SMILES

**H**AVE you ever noted the difference in smiles? Some people smile as though it hurt them; when some others smile, it hurts you. There is the professional smile of the gentleman who wants to sell you a twenty-dollar suit for twelve-fifty, and the pious smile that does not at all approve of you but wants to rent you a pew, and the supercilious smile that knows better but will not argue with you, and the malicious smile that is glad you got what you deserved, and the smile feminine that goes to your head like wine, and the smile gastronomic that comes with Roquefort and coffee, and the smile minatory that is like a rattle to warn you the snake is going to strike, and the smile complacent that one wears when he thinks that he has been particularly clever. Curious how many meanings can be conveyed by the mere twisting of the mouth-line.

The best smile is that of an unbeautiful face. There is always something affected in the smile

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of beauty, but the smile of a homely person is a triumph of sheer good nature.

The best recipe for charm, if not beauty, is not any kind of facial massage, nor lotion, cream or powder, but it is to let a strong, unselfish heart shine through whatever kind of front window God has given you.

## HERE

**H**ERE. In this one word is the quintessence and sum total of all the teachings of wisdom about life. "Over there, over there," they sing in gospel hymn. But it is a wrong remedy based on a wrong diagnosis. Location is never what is the matter.

I was made to fit this hole, and this hole was shaped to fit me. All the happiness of which I am capable I can have here. Right in this country, in this city, in this family, at the corner of Monroe avenue and Sixty-fourth street, is the center of the stellar universe. I have noticed from my windows the peculiar fact to which Proctor Knott referred in his Duluth speech: "The horizon comes down at equal distance in all directions."

Here are greater miracles than in the Old Testament, wonders as worth seeing as anything along the Grand Tour from Liverpool to Naples, joys as pure as in heaven, as high an average of saints as in the calendar, plots as thick as on any stage, and beauty beyond Millet or Turner.

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Give me not scenes more charming, give me eyes  
To see the beauty that around me lies!  
To read the trail of souls, see angels shy  
Among the faces of the passers-by!  
No golden shore I seek, but a heart that sings  
The exquisite delight of common things.  
The Kingdom of Heaven is not There, but Here.  
Oh, for the seeing eye and hearing ear!

## FAILURES

**D**ID you ever think of the noble army of failures? Dante was a failure, embittered and banished. Socrates was a failure, doomed to poison by the city in whose crown of fame he is the brightest star. Joan of Arc was a failure, her young body burned before the fat eyes of comfortable bishops. Michael Angelo called himself a failure, only a poor fragment of his work done. Savonarola was a failure, and Burns and Poe and Tolstoy. And Jesus of Nazareth was a failure, deserted by His friends, hounded by the populace, crucified between two thieves. But it is such failures that make "the choir invisible whose music is the gladness of the world." Only in our weakest, shamefulest moments do we care for what men call success. Face to face with the revealer, Death, we know that we do not in the bottom of our hearts want what we have sought, the foam and glitter. When we come to take our final places, over there in the land of truth, we want to stand, if we may be found

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worthy, beside him who drank the hemlock in Athens, and him who was murdered in Ford's Theater in Washington, and Him who was put to death outside the gate of Jerusalem. There we shall hardly care to know the last lord of privilege. "Better," says Browning,

"Better have failed in the high aim, as I,  
Than vulgarly in the low aim succeed  
As, God be thanked, I do not!"

## SILENCE

**T**HE most eloquent, beautiful and perfect thing in the world is silence. The very top of passion is speechless. When the skilled actor wishes to portray emotions that transcend the ordinary he is still, motionless, expressionless. The most tremendous tragedy of human life is the most silent — death. You are most unanswerable to your opponent when you say nothing. Whatever you say he will retort to in some way; when you say nothing he cannot understand. Alertness and practical skill we can get from business, from the give-and-take of the hurly-burly of affairs. But long and deep thoughts come only from stillness. It is in the heart of solitude alone that we hear the whispers of the infinite and feel those vast, sweet, unutterable currents of truth and of peace that thrill the hidden center of the universe.

There is also a social silence, where two have learned the art of being together and saying nothing. You can manage to get along with



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anybody by click-clack and mutually passing the bromidions, but it is a rare personality that you can enjoy, and feel that he enjoys you, just by the flowing magnetism of being near. The air of this old world is full of streams of silent sympathy, wireless joy, from heart to absent heart. "This world is so waste and empty," says Goethe in "Wilhelm Meister," "when we figure but towns and hills and rivers in it, but to know that someone is living on with us, even in silence, this makes our earthly ball a peopled garden."

## THINGS AS THEY ARE

**I** LIKE things for themselves and not for reasons. I love words not only for what they mean, but also for what they are. Each word has an estimable flavor of its own, and to arrange them is as pleasant as mixing a salad. I love a baby not for what it is to become, but for what it is. I love an old man not for his record, but for his old age. I love music not for what it expresses, but for its own sweet sound. I love woman not for high nor for low reasons, but just for her femininity. I move among the deep instincts, and the more I learn to appreciate the primal desires the happier I am, for Nature is wiser than any explanation of her. I love religion, quite apart from its supposed production of morality, and in spite of its disagreeable respectability, and simply because it pleases me more than music of Debussy or painting of Dabo, though somewhat after the same manner. The universe opens its heart to me because I do not want to change it. What anything is is far more

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wonderful than what it might be. I love my pen, my paper-knife, my rug, my trees, my sky, my wife, my friends and my God. I utterly put away the vile wish to alter anything. And I want to go to Kipling's Heaven, where

“ Each, in his separate star,  
Shall draw the Thing as he sees It  
For the God of Things as They are.”

## THE INVISIBLE

**Y**OUTH has vision. It is young eyes that see the invisible. When we were children we saw ghosts, and Santa Claus, and angels, and giants. They were real. We played with them. Old people wondered why we laughed and capered and shouted. When we told them they shook their heads and smiled indulgently. Having eyes they saw not, and having ears they heard not, what we saw and heard. God had put into our young eyes and ears some subtle alembic that transformed the beggarly elements of the commonplace into the glory and trappings of knights and kings and courts.

It is youthful races that see. It was because Moses had eyes fresh and young that he saw the bush burning. It was because the children of Israel were really childlike that they beheld the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night. Bushes yet are aflame with God, and miraculous pillars of smoke and fire still move before us,

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if we but had faculties young enough to perceive them.

The early Greeks filled the forests with fauns and satyrs, trees had their pale dryads, and from the sea arose nymphs, half foam, half fancy, to beguile them. The moon now is a huge cold clinker whirling about for no particular reason: then it was Diana, the chaste, hunting all night among the fields of stars. The sun nowadays is a big blazing torch, a chemical thing: then it was Apollo, god of light, ushered in by Aurora, attended by the pink-toed Hours.

We sympathize with Schiller, who laments the passing of the gods of Greece; and with Mrs. Browning in her plaint for the death of Pan, he who sung his whispered song on all the margins, playing upon the bowing reeds; and we can almost join with Wordsworth in his cry,

“Great God! I'd rather be  
A pagan, suckled on a creed outworn,  
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn,  
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea,  
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn!”

## FULLNESS

**T**HE only real problem of life is to keep it full. Emptiness is the one unhappiness, the one sin. Tornadoes are caused by aerial vacuums; vices are caused by spiritual vacuums; every crime is a "brain storm." Drunkards and gluttons try to fill the soul by injecting liquids and solids into the stomach. The criminal class is the idle class.

To make a man happy fill his hands with work, his heart with affection, his mind with purpose, his memory with useful knowledge, his future with hopes and his stomach with food. The devil never enters a man except one of these rooms be vacant. Cast him out, and sweep and garnish the room, and he will return with seven other devils. The only way to be rid of him is to fill the room and take down your "To Let" sign.

We abound in misdirected energy. It is hard to get all the air out of a tumbler by the air-pump and your vacuum is never perfect; but it

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is quite easy to do it by filling the tumbler with mercury. How then shall the soul be filled?

"A man consumes his life," says J. Brierly, "in gaining wealth, and finds at the end that he has lost the power of enjoying it." Spinoza, who refused a fortune that he might fill himself a better way, wrote: "To love only the perishable means strife, envy and fear; while to love the eternal feeds the mind with pure joy, and is wholly free from sorrow."

Only the Infinite can fill the infinite soul of man. Then truly, as a modern philosopher says, "we have a degree of existence at least ten times larger than others; in other words, we exist ten times as much."

## AURICLE AND VENTRICLE

**T**HE word heart is used in two senses; one literal, the other figurative: one the muscular center of blood circulation, the other the spiritual center of the affections.

Let us push the analogy, and we shall come upon a curious and striking distinction. As the heart of flesh has an auricle, by which it receives blood, and a ventricle, by which it sends forth blood, even so the spiritual nature has two kinds of love — that produced by receiving and that produced by giving.

For instance, we love apple pie and sleep and flattery and music and all things that pleasantly titillate the senses. This is auricular love, the kind that comes into us. On the other hand, we love also self-sacrifice, making others happy, defending the helpless, dying for our country and all those deeds wherein the soul finds joy in giving out its force — ventricular love, we may say.

And as the blood entering the heart is dark and impure, and the blood issuing from the heart



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is red and bright and pure, so a man's contamination arises chiefly from the inflowing pleasures; he is in danger of becoming a glutton, a drunkard or some other kind of toxic pleasure-seeker. The upbuilding passions are they that go out from us, as patriotism, friendship, kindness and worship.

Yet is arterial made from venous blood. So also in proportion as we enjoy the pleasures of receiving, we transmute their force, if we have good lungs, into the finer and more life-giving emotions. The normal life means a full auricle and a full ventricle. "It is more blessed to give than to receive" carries an implication we sometimes forget—to-wit, that it is blessed to receive.

## REWARDS

**T**HERE is reward for evil, for good there is no reward. It is precisely because there is no possible way to pay for a noble action that it is noble. The moment you pay for it, it becomes base. The curse of the Pharisees is that "they have their reward."

Love is vile, unless it is freely given, without money and without price. Reason likewise adulterates and destroys the noble element of virtue. A man who knows why he is honest is not honest. A woman who understands the grounds of her virtue is not virtuous. The soul never puts forth its sweetest, holiest flower except as a shoot from the subconscious instincts. That is why we adore little children and are shy of professional saints.

Let us not then complain of fate. If all our goodness had been appreciated, if we were healthy, rich and famous, we should lose that feeling of inner triumph. Let us not wail that we cannot understand the doings of destiny. To understand is vanity and vexation of spirit. To be-

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lieve, when it is dark, is pure joy. "The peace of God," we are told, "passeth all understanding." In other words, let our good deeds be done without hope or fear, or, as R. L. Stevenson says, "let us live without fear or favor," for we approach perfection only as virtue comes to have a good taste, and we do right for no other reason in the world than that we like it.

## ART AND DEMOCRACY

**I**F I were king I would make a decree that all art should be for the whole people, and that the one thing wealth could not do should be to control, monopolize or in any way own the time, talents or products of creative genius. Rich men would be granted the privilege of contributing to a general public fund for the purchase of beautiful public things, but they should not be allowed to sit in any councils or boards of direction to manage such matters. I should utterly democratize art, as it is done in the Wagner Theater in Munich, where all seats are the same price. I should allow no private boxes or other opportunity for vanity and snobbery in any playhouse. I should take the theater entirely out of private hands and address myself to the question of public amusement as seriously and as democratically as government now attends to the matter of public schools. I would thus utterly free the artist, whether actor, musician, sculptor,

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painter or writer, and give him but one master, the people. I believe the influence of all aristocracies, of birth or of money has been prejudicial to the best work.

## INTROSPECTION

CARE is a late and artificial product of the human animal. It means introspection. The child's eyes see outward; he never looks into himself nor analyzes his state of being. We grow wretcheder as we grow older for the reason that we fall more and more into the way of taking inventories of our physical, mental and moral insides. The healthiest persons are not those who are always taking care of themselves and what they eat, but those who do not think of such things at all. And the best people are not the saints who are ever probing and examining their motives, but those who are oblivious to motives.

We are curious beings. The one thing that spoils us is self-consciousness. Concentrate your mind on your hand or foot or stomach or eye and you will work up a pain in the spot where your attention is focused. So great and powerful is the fact that the best way to cure an ache is to forget it that this truth has been elevated into a religion.

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And it is as bad for a saint to dwell upon his sanctity as it is for a criminal to dwell upon his perversity. The minute you are conscious of nobleness and goodness and holiness you begin to lose them. Somebody asked Mr. Moody how it stood with his soul. "I haven't any idea," he answered. "I have been so busy saving other people's souls I haven't had time to think about it." That, I venture to say, was his holiest moment.

The remedy for thinking of your bad qualities is not to think of your good ones, but to cease thinking of yourself at all. There will be no temples in heaven, as St. John says, because there will be no conscious religion or morality there. Where people are perfectly good and happy and pure it never occurs to them to talk about it. The divine flavor of any perfect virtue is unconsciousness.

## IMAGINATION

**A** GOOD deal of everyday misery is due to a lack of imagination, for this faculty is the prime essential to being good, polite, kind or agreeable. Any dumb dog can be bad. The New Testament commandments are a pronounced appeal to imaginative power. The Golden Rule requires that you "put yourself in his place," which you cannot do unless you can make the other fellow's self seem real to you. The Beatitudes call for a projected, outside-of-yourself point of view, and the Parables are addressed to the fancy.

We lack that "civic conscience," of which we hear so much, because we lack the ability to imagine ourself as a public thing. We are unkind to children, cruel to prisoners and neglectful of the suffering, simply because we are stupid.

One of the characters in Richter's "Flower, Fruit and Thorn Pieces" says: "Every morning, every evening, I think, how much ought I not to forgive her, for we shall remain so short a time together!"



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If we could project ourselves into "the moment after," how many follies we should not commit! If we had enough imagination, we should do our repenting before instead of after the deed.

Thomas Hood's lines express the crime of riches, which is dullness. His dying rich man cries:

"The wounds I might have healed,  
The human sorrow and smart!  
And yet it never was in my soul  
To play so ill a part:  
But evil is wrought by want of thought  
As well as by want of heart."

## CATCHING STEP

**“R**ENTREZ dans l'ordre!” cried Amiel. Catch step with nature! We are feeble creatures in a world of great forces. We can do nothing, strictly speaking, of ourselves. All we can do is to get these forces to act for us. I cannot pull a million pounds of freight, but by properly managing the expansive force of steam I can make this giant power perform the task. With a bucketful of gasoline I can move along at sixty miles an hour. By hoisting canvas I can pull a thousand-ton ship; that is, by adjusting myself to the wind I can do what is impossible to my unaided strength.

Also among men there are vast currents, and winds, and steam-forces of passion, and inertia, tides and gravitation. To gain my good purpose with men, therefore, I must set my sails, turn my rudder and, in short, accommodate myself to these tremendous dynamics. The great doers, such as Napoleon and Cecil Rhodes and Bismarck, were not individually stronger than other

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men, but they had a certain knack and shrewdness in going with the wind.

To get happiness I need the same sort of cunning. To try to have my way with the world is to struggle with my bare hands against cosmic currents. When I study oak trees and stars, the migration of birds and the coming of the seasons, I discover that my only hope of happiness is in habituating myself to want what nature gives and to want it when she gives it.

There is something immoral in those "special answers to prayer" which consist in supposedly altering the Supreme Will to agree with our little wills. For the real problem in religion is to get ourselves into harmony with the wise and perfect Will that governs all things, and not to bend that Will to ours.

Thus Spinoza: "Non studemus ut natura nobis, sed contra ut nos naturae paremus.— Our desire is not that nature may obey us, but, on the contrary, that we may obey nature."

## ETHICS OF THE INTELLECT

**W**ITH all our pratings of morality, few of us realize the ethics of the intellect. Most persons are honest enough in word and deed, but are dishonest in their thinking. The ultimate courage is to think the truth. Many a saint has gone to his last sleep happy in the consciousness of a life of purity and good works, who has never dared be true and fair with his own mind. So true is this that mental obliquity has even been elevated to an act of salvation, and to say that two and two make five has been supposed to be especially pleasing to our Maker and Judge.

Intellectual probity, in fact, is a discovery of modern times. Ancient historians are not to be trusted, for only recently has history asked, What is true? instead of, What is interesting? Mankind owes an unpayable debt to the men of science, who insist on saying that two atoms of hydrogen and one of oxygen compose water, whether their statement overturns the Republican

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party, disrupts the church, perverts young people and imperils our homes, or not.

It was a bold and terrible step into the dark when men determined to look only for truth and to tell truth alone. Yet it was wise, for that is the real way to show one believes in God. It is still a rare man, however, who can keep his loyalty to the truth uncozened by his desires, untainted by his ambitions and utterly unaffected by any fear or hope of consequences.

## AIR

**WE** would get more pleasure from our days if we were more discriminating in our appreciation of the common stuff that makes the bulk of them; and the ordinary is more wonderful than the extraordinary.

For instance, how many of us taste the air? We take it, but we do not taste it. And there are more different kinds of air than there are of champagne, and it is vastly more important to know them. There is the thin, clear air of Denver, and the nervous air of Winnipeg, and the hot, oven air of August in Kansas, and the piney air of Florida woods, and the salt air of the ocean, and the thick, sweet air of summer gardens, and the vigorous breath of an October morning, and airs flavored with corn or resinous weeds or pungent herbs that flow about us as we ride along a country road on a warm night; besides, there is morning air, noon air and evening air, each differing from the others, so that if we were skilled

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enough we could tell with our eyes shut what o'clock it is.

Then there is the charged and fearful air preceding a storm, and the high, cool air after it; and there is air pregnant with rain and air dry and hard; in fact, there is hardly a feeling in the whole gamut of the human spirit but has a tinge or tone in this marvelous, viewless envelope of earth to express it.

## ESSENTIALS

**I** USED to know a busy woman who would pick up a chair, carry it all around the kitchen and set it down where she got it. She called that work. A vast deal of the activity around us is of this grade. Whole lives are spent tramping a circle. For instance, the farmer who spends his money to get more land, to get more corn, to get more hogs, to get more money, to get more land, and goes sweating on, till death mercifully knocks him in the head. It is bad to be lazy, but it is worse to be busy about nothing. The art of life is to know the essentials and to be sure to attend to them; also to know the nonessentials and to be sure to let them alone. Just before you quarrel with your wife or break with your friend or punish your child, stop and ask yourself if it makes any matter. One way to discern essentials is to use your imagination to gain perspective. That is, to ask yourself, "In a year from now how will it look?" The wisdom of the street, with its usual keenness, has put this truth into



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a homely saying: "What's the difference? In a hundred years from now it will be all the same." The more you practice seeking the essentials and caring for them only, the simpler life will become and the more time you will have for play. And happiness is largely a question of having time. "A gentleman," said Lord Chesterfield, "is never in a hurry." There are only a few things of vital importance. Let us do them, and then sit in the sun. One of the most striking things about Jesus is the vast leisure of Him, the infinite number of things He did not attempt. We get His point of view when He says, "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful."

## HAPPINESS

**T**HE best thing I have ever seen on the subject of happiness is the hint of Carlyle, that happiness is a common fraction of which it is far easier to increase the value by dividing the denominator than by multiplying the numerator. This is worth explaining. First, happiness is not any sort of gettable thing, substance or matter; it is a relation, like a trigonometric sine or cosine. It is the relative value or proportion between two things. One of the things is "What I Have"; this is the numerator. The other is "My Notion of What I Ought to Have"; this is the denominator. Now, the people of the world, mostly fools, to use another Carlyleism, are working away at the utterly asinine task of increasing the numerator; that is, trying to swell the amount of happiness by making the pile of what they have larger than the pile of what they think they ought to have. Hence ennui, locomotor ataxia, nervous prostration, pessimism and suicide. A few, a blessed,

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wise few, do not bother with the numerator; they work constantly to keep down the size of the denominator. They know it is vastly easier to reduce your notion of your deserts than it is to increase your possessions. If any young person be teachable enough to receive this, to believe it and to practice it, he will be more advantaged than by a million dollars.

## ALONE

**T**HE bitterest word in the language is — alone. The first need of the soul is appreciation. We crave and inwardly cry for smiles as a baby wants mother's milk. Down at the bottom of the cup the dregs of heaven is to be noticed, the dregs of hell is to be forgotten. How many hungry spirits haunt the great city! They perch like mateless birds, sad-eyed, in the third floor back. They walk questing through the crowded street. (Oh, the ghostly, craving eyes of them!) They sit in gilded chambers of luxury, "savage," as Carlyle says, "as a tiger in his jungle, only that they devour their own heart and not another's." They seek the crowd in vain, for they find the crowd but an aggregation of solitudes. Scientific men have a theory that atoms in a bar of iron or in a stone do not touch each other, but revolve as stars at dim atomic distances. Likewise between souls are interstellar spaces. Some one comes near, we clasp hands, our lips meet and our friend is whirled away by

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centrifugal destiny into remote galaxies. Oh, fellow men, there is no greater favor you can bestow upon a human being than be interested in him. Any gift you give without giving yourself is salt and ashy. Lowell makes the Master say:

“Who gives himself with his alms feeds three,  
Himself, his hungering neighbor and me.”

## IDEALS

**O**NCE there was a woman who had ideals. She was what is called a good woman. She married a man who had talent. He loved her as a Newfoundland dog loves his master, adoring her unquestioningly, thinking whatever she did was right, because she did it, not wishing her changed in any way. Her love took the form of an intense desire to lift him up to her ideals. She felt her mission in life was his improvement. He idolized her and would have thought it sacrilege should anyone have suggested any betterment of her.

She idolized him, but she hacked, chiseled, sand-papèred and polished her idol constantly, while he would have preferred a little plain worship. His one desire was to make her happy. Her one desire was to make him better. Knowing how he longed for her happiness she was often miserable, to induce him to improve. So she burnt her love gladly at the altar of her ideals and

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prayed that she might have strength to hold out faithful.

He was not a bad sort. But he was very human. Love is given us for rest and peace as well as for inspiration, and stimulus. One day he died. He left her a little note. When she opened it she found two quotations from Robert Louis Stevenson:

"Gentleness and cheerfulness, these come before morality: they are the perfect virtues." And again: "If your morals are dreary, depend upon it they are wrong. I do not say 'give them up,' for they may be all you have; but conceal them like a vice, lest they should spoil the lives of better and simpler people."

## THE PIANO

**Y**OU talk about the impossibility of miracles and insist this is a hopelessly commonplace world. Did you ever watch a master play the piano? I heard Edna Gunnar Peterson the other day, and my soul was stirred as though I had seen water turned to wine or the dead raised. There was something of the wonder of sunsets, the fear of mountains, the marvel of red roses and the mystery of young love, all shot through with a sense of awe at some uncanny, other world power. She is a little thing, a blonde wisp of girlhood, who might be tasting ice cream sodas and selecting gloves; a mere soft, white child of twenty; and she sat for an hour at the piano, with never a printed note, and gave a program an ordinary person could not learn in two lifetimes, with a perfection of technique the same person could not attain unto in three re-incarnations. She played a concerto of Chopin. Those three words—concerto of Chopin—mean the high-water mark of the human brain, heart and fingers in piano



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music. And she played; it was not work. She played, as canaries play at singing, as the wind plays with leaves, as Raphael must have played at painting. To me there is something awful, something that brings tears, some gust of passionate wonder, in mastery. I want to weep and worship when I approach perfect art. This divine child, were society founded on any principles of justice, would be adopted by the State, and, freed forever from wages, should play her life long for the confounding of all infidels to beauty.

## SUNLIT SUMMITS

**A** MAN may well doubt that he is doing a great deed, or making a great discovery, or living a great life, if he does not laugh. There is a certain humor, a divine play, an intoxicating joy, that characterize every great work. When God made the world, it is written "He saw that it was good," and it is not irreverent to imagine these words to imply Him jocund over His amazing creation.

When we read the account of Kepler's discovery, when he, the first man, "broke into the ordinances of Heaven and got a foothold there for definite science," it is almost as if we were beholding a romping boy. He goes up among the stars, as Bushnell tells us, "praying and joking and experimenting together. At last, behold! his prophetic formula settles into place! The heavens acknowledge it! And he breaks out into a holy frenzy, crying: 'Nothing holds me; I indulge my sacred fury! I triumph over mankind! The book is written. It may well wait a century

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for a reader, as God has been waiting six thousand years for an observer! ' ' "

I find this feeling of play in all genius, in Goethe's Faust, in Dante's Inferno, in Ghiberti's Bronze Gates, in Lincoln's life. These men suffered terribly enough and were in earnest, but in their high moments of mastery they seem to smile and show a certain lightness of touch.

Life at its summit is not dark and cold: it is sunlit. This is a great and heartening secret. Mastery is joy. There was a Man who was acquainted with grief more than any other man, and on His way toward the Cross, as He neared the goal of struggle, He said to His friends: "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you."

## ORGANIZATION

**T**HE first part of my life I spent in joining things; the latter part I am spending in resigning. With the advent of twenty-one years came an access of the fever of belonging. I joined every secret society that I could find. For twenty years I allied myself with organizations of all kinds. Then I went to New England. There the organizing fury rages unabated. If they need rain they call a meeting, form an association, and appoint a committee.

Slowly I made the discovery that the average organization is not a means of doing anything, but a substitute for doing. When a group of people feel the call of duty in any direction, civic, moral or charitable, they meet, elect officers, make speeches, select committees, and go home with a sense of having discharged their responsibility.

The majority of church-members go to divine service to ease their conscience, whereas conscience should not be eased but obeyed. The typical Mason finds in his lodge a substitute for that

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brotherliness, charity and helpfulness he ought to exert in his daily life. The good party man, Republican or Democrat, simply uses his party as an instrument for his civic sense of duty, as heathen folk use a piece of carved wood as a god.

I am not pessimistic. People are good, honest and true. But they are so not because of but in spite of their institutions. The one inspiring thing to belong to is Humanity. The source of our real goodness and happiness is the human race. The one thing worth being is a man. Every little group of men who get off in a corner and unite to improve themselves or their fellows eventually becomes a conspiracy against mankind.

## THE DESTROYERS

**I**N the long run perhaps the destroyers will be found to have done quite as much for the progress of the race as the builders have done. We praise the constructive thinkers and the men who do things, and we curse roundly the destructive thinkers and the men who undo. Possibly we are right, but possibly not altogether right. In our own bodies we have complicated machinery, vital organs whose whole business is to destroy, to eliminate, to remove waste. If these organs stop we die. It is the same way in society. The whole tribe of so-called infidels, Strauss, Renan, Voltaire, Ingersoll and their kind, have removed a lot of waste from religion, have excreted a vast amount of poison from our faith, which, left in, would have fevered and ruined us. So the anarchists, the pessimists, the doubters and opponents of all sorts may be called the kidneys of the social organism. All growth is not only a process of upbuilding, but also of tearing down. Thousands of houses must be wrecked and taken

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to the rubbish heap before the city becomes beautiful. And in society rank and pernicious customs, once good, it may be, are to be undone. And a growing love of goodness that advances with our apprehension of ourselves and the universe, demands a continual demolition of old shacks and huts of belief that have become unsanitary.

## HERETICS

**T**HE slums are always orthodox. The drunkard, gambler, thief and the outlaw class generally will tell you they "want their religion straight," they have no use for people who profess to be pious whose piety is not of the most conservative, conventional, old-time variety.

The "smart set" is always orthodox. They do not go to church often, but when they do go they want to attend where it is preëminently respectable and unquestioned.

Heretics all occupy the middle ground. I never knew a thoughtful doubter whose piety was militant or whose impiety was flagrant.

Robert G. Ingersoll should not be classed with heretics; nor Voltaire nor Buechner. They really belong to the propagandists. They had a sort of reversed orthodoxy.

The heretic is of different temper. A sort of mild light plays about him. He has more light than heat.

Pure heretics are Baruch Spinoza, Joubert,



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Coleridge and Dr. Eliot of Harvard. Such as these are the true non-combative souls.

To them there is something better than building up the faith or tearing it down; it is liberty, or the right of faith to grow or fail unaided and unhindered by any force outside of itself.

## MONEY

**M**ONEY has been called the root of all evil. It is the fashion for moralizers to curse it. Meanwhile we each of us seek it. But this is the evil in money: its segregative function. By this I mean its tendency to separate men from one another. The conserving, saving, redeeming forces in the race, such as love, labor and worship, operate to bind men together. Wealth disjoins. As soon as a man becomes rich he moves to the suburbs. The richer he becomes the thicker are his walls, the wider is his park and the higher his fence. He begins to take his pleasures in exclusive forms, such as select clubs, expensive wines and private yachts. This is the peculiar poison in money. For whatever draws one aside from the common lot is vicious. Caste, hereditary nobility and hierarchies have bred all manner of physical, social and moral pests because they fenced off portions of the human race. The Devil is the father of all fences. Plutocracy is the last enemy of democracy. Humanity has

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still a long way to go and many deep lessons to learn before it shall find the wisdom and the courage to sweep away its last divisional force, the irresponsible control of wealth by the individual. There is but one problem before the world; it is: How can we get together?

## GOVERNMENT AND MORALS

**A**N expert in Sunday journalism is quoted as saying that there are but two themes of un-failing interest in popular literature, money and women. I think this is true. More, I think that, far from amounting to a cynical charge that the times are impatient of anything but luxury and sensuality, far from being a shameful confession, it is a noble and heartening truth.

In former days, when power was divided between heredity and superstition, money meant only luxury. The divine right of property was kept under by the divine right of kings. Nowadays the king has gone; the real government is money. And we are interested in money simply because one of the highest concerns of men is government. The strong interest in money means the slow reaching up of the principles of democracy to learn and to tame and to use this, its real governing power.

As for women, the ultimate basis of morality, and of all nobility of life, lies in the sex ques-

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tion. The ethical quality of living men and women, and the physical and spiritual quality of the unborn, depends upon the vigor and the control of the procreative instincts.

Underneath the vast turmoil and creaking, struggle and outcry, in newspapers, novels and politics, about the money power, the gilded profligates and the brutal "interests," and about romantic affection, scandal, passion and divorce, the race is slowly finding itself, and working out, in its world-wide workshop and in centuries of time, the two problems which most deeply concern it — Government and Morals.

## THE MORAL VALUE OF THE ARTS

**T**HE American people do not yet appreciate the moral value of the arts. We are still barbarous enough to class music and painting and the theater among the amusements: they rank a little higher than baseball. We are wrong. They belong to the assets of civilization. They exercise an important function in assisting to redeem the nation from brutishness. In reality, they are a part of "the Kingdom of Heaven."

We come into this world as little animals; we ought to go out as great souls. An old man ought to be more beautiful than a youth, for the latter tingles with animal spirits while the former should be radiant with a finer force. That this is not the case, that we dread old age, shows we have not yet learned what it means to live. To live is simply to become more and more of a spirit and less and less of a brute. Religious emotion is of great help here, but it is not enough. Benvenuto Cellini, as we see in his autobiography, passed from his exaltation in reading Paul's

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Epistles to the depths of disgusting immorality — even murder. His religion was not to blame for his coarseness; but the instance illustrates the wider need of souls.

We need, with religion, everything that brings the point of our main and habitual satisfaction away from the body and over into the mind and heart. Science, business and the arts are hand-maidens of worship. Not that the body's appetites are wicked. They are good, for God made them. But He also made hogs. More and more, as life unfolds, the bracts of flesh should fall away, while the lily of the soul whitens and sweetens to perfection. All the fiery forces of the body pass over into the soul, as the dark juices of the mold rise into the fragrant petals of the flower.

## THE HISTORY OF THOUGHT

**W**HY should not every child be taught in school the history of thought? Just to know what have been the speculations of men in other ages goes a long way toward keeping us rational. Philosophy seems a good distance removed from our modern practical day. Yet every man has a philosophy. Every man has his "views," his working theory of "what is worth while," his own notion of his relation to the universe, his idea of the meaning of life, death and events. And it would pay any man to know what wise men have thought upon these subjects.

One generation ought to stand on the shoulders of the one preceding. In business, in science and in art we do so; but in philosophy we seem to stumble along with the same crude beginnings of thought that were thrashed out centuries ago. Most of the new fads, new-fangled religions and cults that sweep hundreds away from common sense were discussed and exhausted before we were born.



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Familiarity with some simple, concise history of philosophy, studied in the high school, would, in later life, "frae monie a blunder free us, and foolish notion." The ideas of the Greek philosophers, of the humanists of the renaissance, of the writers in the Aufklaerung period in the eighteenth century, all have their bearing upon the underlying theories of life and destiny of to-day.

Quite aside from one's religious life and creed, outside of all doctrinal controversy, lies the need of knowing what our fathers thought. We need clear, untechnical, unbiased writers to tell us the story of the mind.

## SELF

**S**ELF is a master each man serves and no man likes. He is always making us eat what distresses us and drink what poisons us. We want others to love him, yet we hate him, because he is the enemy of love. He discourages religion. He is lazy, pleasure-loving and unreasonable. We do no good till we flout him, yet it is for his sake we do good. We deny him in order to get to Heaven, but it is he we want to get to Heaven. He is always with us, and we dread to be alone with him.

The story is told of the poet Shelley that he had a dream in which he was continually pursued and thwarted by a strange man whose face was veiled. He made a fortune, and the stranger took it from him. He achieved fame, and the stranger turned it to disgrace. The veiled figure frightened him in his bed, spoiled the taste of his food at the table, abashed him in company and disturbed him in his solitude. At last he fell in love with a rare and divine girl.

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The stranger disappeared. The poet's wooing prospered. They were to be married. They approached the altar. When the priest was about to speak the words that should consummate his happiness, suddenly the veiled figure appeared and cried: "I forbid the banns!" "Who are you?" said the wretched bridegroom, and springing forward tore the veil from the man's face. Then with a shriek he fell, seemingly lifeless, and awoke trembling, from his dream. For the face was that of — himself.

## WORLD CONSCIOUSNESS

**M**OST of our civic evils are due to a lack of organization. We are still afraid of each other. It seems almost that the last lesson mankind will learn is to get together. At present we are but half emerged from barbarous individualism, as a primeval monster half risen from the slime. Our lodges, societies, churches, parties, unions and nations are but timid experiments at real unity. In each of these groups lingers the poison of antipathy toward other groups.

Future generations will smile at our absurd provincialism. We have so limited a notion of Our Own, and can apply it only to our kin, our property, or our fellow members of this or that. We shall never heal the deep hurt of humanity until we enlarge Our Own to mean the City, the Nation and the World. We shall then feel the reproach of an unsightly Lake Front as keenly as we are shocked at our unclean doorstep. We shall not think a city beautiful until the quarters

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of the poor are beautiful, as lovely as the suburbs of the rich.

Most of all, we need a world-feeling. This alone can effectually stop war and tariffs, plagues and famines. Such a passion seems a long way off, a mere dream. There is one movement that embodies it — Christian missions. Much ridiculed and sneered at, the missionary deserves at least this credit, that he is working a world-feeling. With Charles Darwin and R. L. Stevenson we ought to appreciate him. Is he not doing more than any of us to bring the time when all men's good shall —

“ Be each man's rule, and universal peace  
Lie like a shaft of light across the land,  
And like a lane of beams athwart the sea,  
Thro' all the circle of the golden year? ”

## ACCURACY

**A**CCURACY of thought is a bugaboo that has led many a thinker astray. Definiteness is a heathen idol to which many a philosopher has wandered. For the sake of distinctness men have even denied the self-evident.

Huxley, for instance, brought into fashion the word agnostic. As the world riddle was too much for him he canceled everything that lay beyond the confines of the senses and intellect.

Spinoza and the Eleatics, on the contrary, denied the real existence of anything but God (*Weltverneinungslehre*).

So one group denies this and another that, and all for the same end, accuracy. Pythagoras sought the solution of all things in number. And the attempt has been made to represent all ideas by algebraic signs (called algorithms) and to work out logic as you would your old school friend:  $a^2 + 2ab + b^2 = ?$  Charles Dodgson (that strange mathematician who, as Lewis Carroll, wrote "Alice in Wonderland," the greatest of

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child stories) composed a "game of logic," in which you could prove a proposition by moving red and white counters on a sort of checkerboard.

But it will not do. Life, the universe, God, love, all the big, essential things, remain mysterious. If you have a clean-cut, accurate notion of any one of these things you can be sure of one thing—that you are wrong. If your idea is right it is certain to be confused. A man born blind, as Whately tells us, cannot possibly have a definite and true notion of things seen. An honest man blind-born will say: "Sight resembles hearing, in that one can by it perceive objects at a distance; and feeling, in that one can tell their shape. Somewhere between these two points is the mystery of seeing." The cocksure, born-blind theorist will say: "Oh, yes: I know just exactly what red is. It is like the sound of a trumpet."

Remember, therefore, that clearness is not always truth, and do not despair if you feel ignorant.

## MEANWHILE

**T**HE most insistent word in the dictionary is meanwhile. That is the tormenting, pragmatic word that will not down, but rises like Banquo's ghost at all our Utopian feasts.

I have no trouble with my theories of the millennium. I know how we are all going to act then, when "no one shall work for money and no one shall work for fame," but what am I to do now? It is simple enough to be an ideal citizen in an ideal state, a perfect Christian in a perfect church, a model husband in a model family; but what is one to do in the actual present hugger-mugger of tousled good and bad?

I listen with interest to the Socialist or the Christian or the Single Taxer or the Philosophical Anarchist as he describes the Utopia his scheme will certainly produce, but — in the meanwhile?

Right and wrong are not simple. The two moral strings are usually tied in a hard knot. We do a little reasoning, much guessing, and end by following our instincts. What mother knows



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just how to bring up a child? } Meanwhile she  
has to bring him up. Who can tell the absolute  
right in politics? Meanwhile one must vote.  
Political party machines reckon on this ignorance  
and helplessness of the voter, who, in despair,  
votes the straight ticket. Who knows the truth  
about the creeds? Meanwhile we must believe  
something.

This question of what to do meanwhile, this  
difficult adjustment of all the elements of circum-  
stance and of personality, is one that comes right  
home to the individual; he cannot escape it; no  
general rule, or system, or teacher, or church, or  
party can get this burden off his shoulders. It  
is the penalty of freedom. Whoever escapes it  
loses his life.

## MY FAMILIAR

**I** HAVE a very dear friend—who does not exist. He never did exist. It is much better so than if he had lived, for then he would have to pass away, and I should be inconsolable.

This friend is of imagination all compact, but none the less real for all that; far more real, indeed, than the flesh-and-bloods. He has no face nor form; I never saw him and do not want to see him. He is closer to me than ever the eye or ear could bring him.

He is the man with whom I hold long conversations when I am alone. After I come home from the opera he keeps humming tunes inside my ear. He brings to me, when I am dropping off to sleep, moving pictures of what has happened during the day.

Sometimes we are happy together, and I whistle as I walk and smile as I work. Sometimes we are utterly wretched, and he prods me and taunts me and reproaches me; and at those times life is nauseous and I want to quit. I count it the great-

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est triumph of my life that I am getting along with him more comfortably every year. We have come to be real good fellows.

If you ask me how I think of the things I write or say I will tell you a secret: I do not invent them; he tells them all to me. When he is of a mind to talk I can write; when he grows taciturn I can do nothing.

I said we are friends: I must alter that. I do not love him. He is simply my indispensable companion. I do not know who he is. But all my days he is going to stay by me, and up to the article of death he will be whispering, debating, cozening, applauding, hissing, right by my side. I hope he will like me, for after death I fancy he will have something to say. He is my other self.

## DEMOCRACY AND WEALTH

**T**WO children are born, the one in a mansion, the other in the slums. To number one we hand on a silver platter the power over the lives of thousands of his fellows — that is, money. Number two we damn with an environment of poverty. It is not a square deal. The babies were not consulted about coming among us.

The only safe rule in any matter is justice. It is not just to appoint one child to power and the other to penury.

A Rothschild's son is made king of millions by the same line of argument used in making Louis XVI king of France: he is his father's son. The modern world has no ruler over the supplies of life save money. And we continue to choose our real Kaisers by methods which in politics we discarded a hundred years ago.

Justice demands no man should be allowed to come into the control of a great wealth-mass who has not been elected by the people — that is, who

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has not earned it; for earning money is, in a way, equivalent to popular election.

This is applying the principle of democracy to wealth. Wealth is all the real government we have. We must make it responsible. We need a new Rousseau and a new social contract.

I believe some people ought to be rich and some poor; some ought to live in palaces and eat quail and ride in automobiles, and some ought to gnaw the crust. But in each case the man ought to earn his lot. Equality is an idle dream, it is immoral even; but justice is perfectly practicable.

But, if no inheritance, what incentive would a man have to work? Answer: the same incentive a man has to become President of the United States, or a distinguished scientist, or an artist — can he pass these personal emoluments and attainments on to his son?

## REFLECTED SOULS

**T**HE soul sees itself in the world. The lover is not enraptured with his mistress but with his glorified self in her eyes. The bandits who formerly inhabited the Alps saw nothing grand in the Vale of Chamonix. The Indians of America's primeval forests were not awed and uplifted by those "God's first temples"; they were waiting behind the secular oaks with the tomahawk to brain their enemy. "I never saw a sunset like that," said a man to Turner, regarding one of that artist's paintings. "Don't you wish you could?" was Turner's reply.

It is not the horses you admire in "The Horse Fair," it is the soul of Rosa Bonheur; it is Landseer that is great, and not his dogs. It is not the peasants in "The Angelus," but the personality of Millet that affects you. You might see a thousand dogs, horses and peasants and never be charmed.

"Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" said rascally Ahab to the Prophet Elijah. The vile

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Roman world accused the apostles of "turning the world upside down." Nero burned the Christians for destroying Rome. The Pharisees said to Jesus: "Thou hast a devil." The united opinion of all the devious and crafty politicians and gargantuan trusts is that the reformer is a mischief-maker.

I care nothing for what you claim to be your own motives, for most men deceive themselves; but let me hear what kind of motives you habitually impute to others and I can easily tell the kind of man you are.

## THE THEATER

**T**HE theater is destined to become, if it is not already, the greatest moral force among us, for good or bad. Henrik Ibsen showed himself to be of prophetic mind when he chose the drama as the vehicle of his message. As a preacher or novelist he would have passed: as a dramatist he will abide.

The reason for the theater's ethical power is this: that the mind does all its real learning while it is being amused. Very few lessons stay by us that we work to get. The intellect and heart do not grow by making effort, but by pleasurable exercise. "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature?"

The great teachers understood this law. Jesus taught in stories. The gist of Pestalozzi and Froebel is that the child learns by play. So do grown persons. Nothing has such moral dynamic as amusement.

Play is not the Devil's; it is Nature's, it is God's method of development.



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Some day every little town in America will have its municipal theater right alongside of its municipal church. The coming common-sense that will abolish sectarianism will cease to neglect and despise amusement and will manage its drama as carefully as its public school.

## DESIRES

**T**HE will has no sense, as Schopenhauer and Edward von Hartmann tell us. That is, when you dig down to where an act of the will starts, you find not logic and reason, but dumb desire.

Our desires are wholly unintelligent. They have absolute disregard for Cause and Effect, which is the very essence of intelligence. For instance: I want to be rich, but not to do the work that causes riches; I want to be warm, but not to wear my overcoat; the child wants both to eat overmuch candy and to feel good; the want-power in us is utterly unintelligent.

Our desires are also non-moral. We want things without reference to whether they are good or bad, decent or shameful, helpful or injurious. Not that we really do immoral things, but we all want to do them, at some time or other, and our moral sense is something that comes later and suppresses or allows the desires.

Now it is precisely these desires that constitute

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character. These are what we *are*. They can be trained and changed, but it is a long and difficult task. And this task is the whole of culture, of education and of religion. A man is never free and cultured and good until he automatically and subconsciously wants the good, the true and the beautiful. It is not enough to will these things and to do them. They must get rooted in our instincts.

## THE FOUR CLOCK STROKES OF HISTORY

**I**T is a curious fact that the vine of this human stock bears its best fruit in clusters. If you draw a hundred-year arc from 450 to 350 B. C. you will include about all of "the glory that was Greece." Your arc will touch, if not include, the time of the plays of Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes; the histories of Thucydides, Xenophon and Herodotus, the poems of Anacreon, the philosophies of Anaxagoras, Aristotle, Democritus, Socrates, and Plato; the exploits of Pericles and Alcibiades; the oratory of Demosthenes, and the art of Phidias and Praxiteles. Did you realize all this was in so short a time?

Draw another arc from 50 B. C. to 50 A. D. and you will touch not only the day of Jesus, but of the great group of those men who made "the grandeur that was Rome": Horace, Vergil, Cicero and the great Cæsars.

Draw now a third arc from 1450 to 1550, roughly taken, and you will cover the most re-

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markable period of history; in Italy you will find all the great masters of art, Raphael, Angelo, Leonardo, Titian, Correggio; in North Europe the origin of printing, gunpowder and the Copernican theory, besides Luther, Erasmus and Calvin; in England Colet, Linacre, Sir Thomas More and John Knox, and in the Spanish peninsula such names as Columbus, Vasco da Gama, Magellan and Albuquerque.

A fourth arc, from 1820 to 1920, will span the great modern era of invention, including the wonders of steam and electricity.

These are the pulse beats of humanity. These are the striking of the clock of history.

To know the history of the world you need to study only four centuries.

## THE CITY

**I**T is the fashion, I know, to write against cities, and many writers (who could not be tempted from New York) describe the joys of the countryside. But I confess to feeling within me the strong tug that draws the swarm of my kind to the thick centers of population. I distinctly love cities, and the bigger the better. I enjoy taking a soul-bath in this my humanity as I thread the teeming streets. By day the roar of the elevated trains, the rumble of the truck wagons, the rattle of the street cars, the occasional mad rush and clang of the patrol wagon or fire engine, the turbulent river of men and women coursing the sidewalk and, over all, the grim cliffs of steel and stone full of driving business—it is all as if I were in the engine-room of civilization and listening to the crashing looms that are weaving the future. And at night it is as exciting as a battle to stand in the street when the theater crowds are coming out, and see the people flashing and turning like breakers of the human sea,

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pouring their full stream of life about me; to hear the sharp artillery of the automobiles, the clatter of horse's hoofs on the stones, the yells of the carriage-tenders, the shrill cry of newsboys, the drone of hawkers, the swish of women's dresses, the shattered fragments of laughter and speech — oh, for a poet to say the spell and beauty of it!

The deep instincts of men draw them together. It is a curious thing that when Saint John saw Heaven opened it was not a Holy Farm he beheld, but a Holy City. Mankind started in the Garden; it moves toward the New Jerusalem.

## IS RELIGION DECLINING?

**I**S religion growing or losing ground in our modern civilization? In this, as in all questions, we must define our terms. Nine men out of ten seek to answer the question by inquiring whether the churches are waxing or waning. But the first thing to be settled is whether the progress of religion and of the church mean the same thing. Is religion inseparably bound up with the organization? If it is, then religion is dying out, for there is no doubt that the church has less leadership and influence upon the intellectual life of men than ever before in history. The ecclesiastic, as such, has ceased to exert any considerable power in politics, art and letters, and with the downfall of authority in modern thought has been entirely banished from science and philosophy. Even in social life the priest and parson rule no more, as in the good old times, and are merely tolerated.

But if religion is considered to be a spiritual force among men, a force of which its various



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organizations are but by-products, then the case is wholly different. It resolves itself into a question whether there is more moral motive, more recognition of the high spiritual laws, more sense of God and more of the nobler virtues now than ever before. And to this the answer is an emphatic Yes.

For there never was a time when pure right and wrong were more strictly appealed to in judging men and institutions, when more work was being done for the simple love of humanity, and when movements and parties based themselves more absolutely upon the principles of fundamental justice.

Religion belongs to the race, not to any one or more institutions.

## THE WICKEDEST MAN

**I** WONDER what kind of a person the very wickedest possible man in the world would be. He would not be, I fancy, a person of gigantic passions, uncontrollable heats and wolfish animalisms, but rather one in whom all passion had died and left him stone cold. In all desires there is a saving human element. Evil ascends from the merely human range into diabolical perfection as it leaves the region of heart and blood and becomes purely curious and unfeeling. Our imaginary monster, therefore, would not want anything; he would not care. He would be past greed, lust, drunkenness and anger, for there is hope for men in those sins. Jesus had no harsh words for the thieves and vice-bound souls; He was, indeed, called "The Friend of Sinners"; but He cursed the Pharisees, who were not sinners, but worse. Goethe says of Mephistopheles: "It is written on his brow, he never loved a human soul." In the Buddhist belief Heaven is the vanishing of desire:

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in the Christian theory this seems to be hell. For in Dante's *Inferno*, when the two poets had reached Dis, the very bottom and extreme of the home of wicked souls, they found the place frozen solid and Satan fixed in eternal ice, flapping his wings and sending his influence throughout the world in cold pulsations.

## TRAINING THE WILL

**T**HE old-fashioned division of the personality was into three parts—the intellect, the sensibility and the will. We have all sorts of institutions and systems for training the first two, but what have we for developing the last? The intellect is exercised at school by arithmetic and geography and the like; there are institutes and clubs for improving the sensibility—that is to say, for music, painting and so on; but where shall the will be sent to school? It is our most important third. In a huge ocean liner all parts of the ship, men and goods and machinery, are going eastward, except the propeller, which goes west. The speed of the vessel one way depends on the velocity of the screw in the opposite direction. So a man's real progress in character depends upon his will, his resistance-dynamic. Better an ignorant man than an educated man with a flabby will. Freedom is a curse to any people who have not learned self-control. The will is a little fragment of Almighty God lodged in the

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human soul. So long as the will remains, for it is the spirit's citadel, no man can be conquered. "There is nothing good or evil save in the will," said Epictetus. And Confucius' saying was: "The general of a large army may be defeated, but you cannot defeat the determined mind of a peasant."

## INEFFICIENCY

**W**E do love theories that coddle us. The reason many people take up with schemes, the gist of which is that society is all wrong and ought to be made over, is not the truth these schemes contain, but the fact that they throw upon government and environment the blame which properly rests on weak wills and incompetent hands.

What is the bane of housekeeping? Incompetent servants. What is the matter with the restaurant business? Incompetent help. What is the matter with any business, making shoes or cut glass or razors or boilers or looms or houses? The trouble is to get men who will do what they are paid for doing. What is the weakness of the public school system? Inefficient teachers. Ask the man at the head of any business his greatest worry and he will tell you it is to get good men. And by good he does not mean pious nor wonderful men, but simply men capable and willing to do their work.

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One of our favorite types of fiction is the man who "only asks a chance to work." There are doubtless some such and they deserve sympathy. But the prime cause of nonemployment is plain inefficiency. The world is growing more and more uncomfortable for the man who will not "make good."

"Creation's cry goes up  
From age to cheated age,  
Give us the men who do the work  
For which they get the wage!"

## BROTHERHOOD

**I** THINK most men of candid mind must admit that within them lies the possibility of being any kind of a criminal. From any patch of earth, warmed and watered, will sprout weeds: and in the purest soul lie hidden germs of all manner of wickedness. An honest and respected man of forty who is not in the penitentiary ought to be thankful. Give due credit to our force of character, to our innate probity and to our religion, and still we must recognize that chance and circumstance (or you may call it grace of God) have stopped us many a time at the edge of a precipice.

I make bold to believe that the habitants of heaven and I are akin, and the exalted relationship thrills me; but I know also that they who creep through the dusky byways of the slums and they who fester in the solitude of prisons have their share in my blood. My soul is a part of that larger soul which is humanity. As my body could not live out of the air so my soul could not



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live outside of my race. I cannot be all bad so long as there are good men and women; I cannot be perfectly happy while any human being weeps; I cannot be all pure while my brothers are vile. Christ uttered the cry of humankind when He said: "I in them and they in me!"

Once an old anchorite died alone in his cave on Mount Sinai; he had tried to escape humanity; he could not, and no man can; he confessed his defeat by writing upon the wall this line of Terence: "*Homo sum et humani a me nil alienum puto* — I am a man and nothing human is alien to me."

## THE WRITER

**M**ANY writers strive to tell something new. They need to be reminded of the truth contained in a fine passage which Goldsmith struck out of his "Vicar of Wakefield." Doctor Johnson mentions it: "When I was a young man, being anxious to distinguish myself, I was perpetually starting new propositions. But I soon gave this over; for I found that generally what was new was false."

The greatest genius in literature does but express for the people what they already know. He gives voice to their dumb convictions. He seizes the thin, fugacious wisps of fancy in the common heart, and to these airy nothings gives "a local habitation and a name." Christ did not teach humanity, He uttered humanity. Dante was called "the voice of ten silent centuries." Whoever will be a great writer let him tell us the feel of green trees upon the soul, translate the pain and pleasure of his household into speech, find words that set forth the wonder of the things

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other persons call commonplace, put his ear to the bosom of the earth in his own dooryard and tell us its secrets, melt the crowd of the street in the crucible of his creative fancy and distil for us its attar. How rare this gift, how difficult its exercise! We get a glimpse of the process of real authorship in Wordsworth's lines:

"Three sleepless nights I passed in sounding on,  
Through words and things, a dim and perilous way."

## A MARTIAN WILL

**S**OME time ago, I have forgotten when and where, I heard how men make their wills on the planet Mars. There it seems they have long since abandoned the primitive folly of private property, and hence in their last testaments occupy themselves with bequeathing what they really have. A man's will on Mars therefore would run something like this: I give and bequeath to my wife the memory of my affection; to my son John my power of self-control, which he needs and which I acquired by great pains; to my daughter Julia my ability to hold my tongue and my habit of secretiveness, for she talks too much; to my son Edward, who is inclined to be ambitious, my knowledge of what is worth while, to-wit: honor, love and contentment; to my sister Alfaretta, who worries, my knack of enjoying each day as it comes, and neither brooding over the past nor apprehending unpleasantness in the future; to my neighbors I leave my peaceful disposition; to the people at large I give

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back all my goods and chattels, for they came from the people; to my friends I leave the joy of my loyalty and trust, and to my enemies the satisfaction of knowing I am dead; to my pupils and apprentices I leave my skill; to the devil I give my sins, weaknesses and mistakes; and to God I give my soul, for He made it, put it in this world and takes it out, for reasons best known to Himself.

## CINDERELLA

**I**T is a truism of philosophy that all joy comes from the inside of one's self. The whole list of teachers, including Socrates, Seneca, Jesus, Solomon and Mrs. Eddy, unite on this point that happiness is from one's own heart and not from one's surroundings. But we have neglected to emphasize the converse of this proposition, to-wit: that our sorrows come from others. Yet this is true. The gist of every tragedy, from Æschylus to Sudermann and Ibsen, is the situation of the soul crushed under the iron rim of institutions, martyred by other men's moral codes or tortured by society's conventions. The phases of the eternal tragedy are suicide, poison, the stake — Hamlet, Socrates, Joan of Arc.

It is strange how the human soul fears the only source of its happiness — itself. The shamed spirit of man dreads nothing so much as the sight of its own face.

As children we want to play king, mamma, or anybody but ourselves. The newsboy cries in a

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singsong; he would blush to use his natural tones. The parson must put on a conventional voice with his gown; if he should speak in a common house or street voice his congregation would be shocked as by an indecent exposure of his mind.

Originally sprung from apes we achieve the last rung of civilization when we have completely monkeyized ourselves and act only by imitation. One of the definitions of "a natural" in the dictionary is "a born fool." "Simple" likewise has for one of its meanings "one who is deficient in intelligence."

We are ashamed of what is our own, proud of all that is borrowed; ashamed of our skin, proud of our clothes; bringing forth our own opinion timidly and flourishing a quotation as a revolver; eating what we like in the kitchen and eating what we detest at banquets; neglecting those we love to be with prominent persons who bore us; calling our own belief doubt and other men's belief the true faith. Our mental table is crowded with distinguished guests; the soul, a poor Cinderella, sits in the ashes by the hearth. Yet when the Prince comes he will have none but Cinderella.

## THE INSTITUTION

**I** HERE record my very serious conclusion, toward which my mind has been steadily gravitating for twenty years, that in the long run, when the final accounts are balanced, all institutions will be found to have done quite as much harm as good. The real good forces are purely personal. The real good is done on earth by certain individuals, as Moses, Jesus, Luther and Lincoln. Having appeared among men, this good force is straightway institutionalized, whereupon it begins to deteriorate. When it becomes so bad as to be unbearable a new hero appears out of the blue and smashes it. Then around that new hero's personality gathers a new institution, which in turn becomes inevitably an enemy to mankind. I am not one of those who hope for the millennium by the triumph of any institution, but solely by individual effort. The progress of the race in ideals and morals is never by conformity, but by perpetual revolt. The only redeeming force in humanity is the im-



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pulse given to it by good men. The effort to organize this impulse, to create some machinery to make it permanent, is vain. Our only hope is in the continued advent of free and potent souls.

## SANITY AND VARIATION

**W**HEN you see your late grandmother ride in through the doorway seated upon a pink elephant, which rolls upon wheels and puffs steam like a locomotive, and when the old lady suddenly vanishes, and the animal sits down to the piano and begins to play and sing, you conclude one of two things: either that you are dreaming or that you are crazy. For the essence of dreams and of insanity is one and the same, to-wit: the mind is looking at one object and cannot look away. A sane man, when he has a strange experience, pinches himself — that is, he appeals to his environment.

The secret of sanity is orientation. Hence the danger in a fixed purpose or an unwavering attention. You can find the lost collar-button better if you will look rapidly here and there than if you gaze too intently in one place. To see a squirrel among the tree leaves the eye must dart about and not keep to one spot. Our minds are by nature discursive. It is harder to listen to

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a sermon that sticks to the text than to the vaudeville man who talks of "cabbages and kings."

Hence if you have worried long over a problem put it away and knock about a while; you will return to it with an access of sanity. Long, uninterrupted concentration upon one subject tends to hypnotize. I have seen some people who, it seemed to me, ought occasionally to alter the petition, "Lord, teach us how to pray," and ask, "Lord, teach us how to play."

## BELIEF AND FANCY

CERTAINLY the most abused word in the mouths of men is "believe." Englishmen employ more frequently and with more accuracy the word "fancy." Our slovenly habit of believing all sorts of things gets us into no end of trouble. For usually the common run of men, when they say they believe this or that, simply mean that they have a vivid mental picture of it. The slipshod mind "believes" whatever actively stimulates the imagination and the emotions. How much more honest the orthodox Turk would be if he should say "I fancy" instead of "I believe there is no god but God and that Mahomet is His prophet?" (Of course this does not apply to my own sect, which to question far be it from me!) Belief is a condition of mind automatically produced by evidence. It is bloodless as the rule of three. I deserve no credit, no blame for it. Fancy is warm, full of desire and volition. I fancy I am beloved, that to-morrow will be gay, that there is somewhat

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beyond the grave. I believe that water freezes at 32 and boils at 212 Fahrenheit. I cast no slur on common "beliefs"; they are misnamed, that is all. In the imagination, not in logical conclusions, lie the makings of character. Heaven and hell are not facts to be proved. They are images to be conserved. So Omar:

"I sent my soul throughout the invisible,  
Some secret of that after life to spell,  
And by and by my soul returned to me,  
And whispered, I myself am heaven and hell."

## SIN AND CONSERVATISM

**T**HE one department of human activity in which there has been no progress is sin. There are only ten commandments, and having broken them there is nothing to do but to break them again. In all other directions the race has improved; for we have railways instead of horses, typewriters instead of quills, steam radiators for open fires, not to mention washing-machines, telephones, matches, democracies, soda-water, rubber heels and hatpins. But men are getting drunk nowadays on Clark Street, Chicago, and in the lobster palaces of Broadway, New York, and along the Boulevard Poissonière, in Paris, just about as Noah did when he stepped from the ark and found the bottle. The painted ladies of our day have hardly improved upon Thais, Lais and Company. The modern murderer goes about his work very much after the manner of Cain; the latest domestic scandals in Kansas City or Pittsburg follow the lines of David or the wife of Marcus Aurelius; and the

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liars and thieves of Chicago and St. Louis have advanced none beyond Ananias and Judas.

Hell is objectionable principally because it is such a bore. People go there in droves, each because the other goes. When a man starts for Heaven he has to break away and fight, and consequently amounts to something. The longer I live the more I am amazed at the limited intelligence that can keep interested in wickedness, and the more I marvel at the sheer creative genius and resourcefulness needed in just being good.

## INDIVIDUAL AND INSTITUTION

**T**HERE are two distinct, apparently opposite, movements in modern thought. The one bears toward individualism, urges the importance of oneself as against all institutions and the world. In this cult we find Max Stirner, Nietzsche and Ibsen. The other tendency is toward the mass as opposed to the unit. This feeling underlies the vast Socialist growth in Europe and America.

As usual, in complex human affairs, both are right. The great task of civilization is to substitute the civic for the personal consciousness, just as the problem of religion is to supplant egoistic by altruistic motives. It is a blind, instinctive working out of this feeling that has led men to organize societies, lodges, churches, parties, nations and all groups. They have had a dim perception of the truth that a group-consciousness is a nobler thing than a mere individual consciousness.

And yet against this solidifying tendency there



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has always been a revolt of the soul. The individual keeps declaring his independence.

In some way the future and perfect organization or institution will have to be such as not only to satisfy man's altruistic, socialistic instinct, but also leave room for the utter liberty of the individual, personal feeling. The Universe and I can only meet as equals.

## THE ZEITGEIST

**W**E do not realize how thoroughly we are composed of the Spirit of the Times. We have some individuality, but for the most part we are of our age and environment. Certain world-thoughts throb through humanity's brain, certain world-feelings tingle in the racial heart; there are twentieth-century tastes, American ideas; and of these great ocean-masses of cerebration and sensation I contain a drop.

For most of my notions of honor, purity, kindness and courage I frankly give credit to the wave that lifts me. The mass of which I am a particle must also take a good share of the blame for my ignorance, stupidity and cruelty. For all that, I am still independent, free and responsible. If you can reconcile those two contradictory facts you can do more than any philosopher has yet done.

Particularly our estimate of men ought to take more into account their Zeitgeist. How much of Luther was the mere embodiment of a deep cur-

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rent that flowed through German hearts in his day? How much of me, or you, is distinct, separable and personal, and how much of us is but an X sign representing so many kilowatts of the spiritual force latent in the mass of men?

This thought, while it ought not work to make us evade responsibility, ought to temper our judgment of man. No man can resist wholly the Zeitgeist, because it is in him as well as around him. As Nietzsche says: "Der Geist seiner Zeit nicht nur auf ihm liegt, sondern auch in ihm ist — The Spirit of his Time is not only round about a man, but it is also within him." It is like atmospheric pressure, in and upon the body the same.

## THE AGREER

**E**VERY once in a while you meet the Man Who Does Not Agree With You. There are still a number of people left over from Yesterday who seem to think it is of vital importance for opinions to agree. There never was a more fugitive delusion.

Goethe says that the Mahometans begin their education by learning this principle: that the opposite of every proposition is also true. And truly the deeper a mind thinks the more it must express itself in antinomies. A paradox is often truer than a postulate.

Time was, and not long ago, when every newspaper had to be a party organ. Stalwart citizens also read only such books and periodicals, listened to only such preachers, cultivated only such friends and mingled with only such people, as agreed with their opinions. Such persons reached their perfection, perhaps, in a certain class of English dignitaries, of whom Emerson said that at a particular point there might be heard a certain click

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in their minds, signifying that henceforth they were shut to any new idea.

We are learning a better unity; not that based upon similarity of intellectual conclusions, but upon oneness of taste and feeling. My ecclesiastical friend who is leagues from me in opinion gets next to me when we both try to "help a lame dog over a stile." Our doctrines may separate us on Sunday, but our hearts come together on Monday — at the hospital. Our divergent notions make us Republicans, Democrats and Socialists; our strong common instincts make us all good Americans.

I ask no man to agree with me; I do not always agree with myself: but I would that all men loved me. Only in intellectual liberty can there grow up a genuine unity in work and feeling; as Tacitus has written: "*Rara temporum felicitate, ubi sentire quae velis, et quae sentias dicere licet*" — Such being the happiness of the times, that you may think as you please, and speak as you think."

## MEMORY

**W**HAT we call a good memory is really a weakness. That is to say, a memory which can retain the whole of a book page after one reading, and the like. It is oftener a burden than an advantage. It is fatal in a public speaker, for it betrays him into plagiarism.

It is bad for anyone whose work is creative, for the greatest task in good writing or painting or musical composition is to escape the thralldom of things we remember. Almost all of the music one hears in the comic opera to-day, and almost all the books, whether romance, poetry, essays or description, strikes us as dry and sterile, because it is made of stuff remembered and simply changed in form and arrangement. An artist is great in proportion as he brushes aside all his masters and all he has learned, and gives vent to his soul.

The best is what Hamerton called "a selecting memory," which means the faculty of choosing and retaining only the things worth while. It is as important to be a good forgetter as it is to

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have a good memory. Why should I want to keep in my mind the kings of England and the dates of the Presidents? Most "memory systems" are silly devices to enable us to fill our minds with such rubbish. The good memory is one: which is logical, orderly, automatically expelling vast quantities of material, selecting a little.

## HEREDITY

**T**HERE is a weak spot somewhere in the heredity argument. We are told by gentlemen with a scientific flourish and a professional cocksureness that we are never going to get fine humans until we breed for fine men as carefully as cattle are bred to get fine beeves. Our race is demonstrated to be running to cretins and criminals because brides and grooms are selected by moonlight and by holding hands, and are not nominated by the state board of health. But somewhere in the chain of reasoning which is supposed to carry the conclusions of the shorthorn pedigree book over into human nature, somewhere there is a missing link.

For, as a cold, unscientific fact, the best stock of the human race is the scrub. For some reason when the Great Man arises he always grows out in the woods-pasture and never in the hothouse. Instances: Napoleon, Lincoln, Wagner, Beethoven, all the artists from Giotto to Whistler and all the writers from Homer to Kipling.



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We can improve roses and create navel oranges, and by selection get cows that give amazing milk, but old Bill Jones' boy down on the Okaw bottoms still has a way of intellectually, morally and physically surpassing Isaac Newton 2d and John Wesley 3d.

The thing called greatness remains the property of the "Common Herd."

## PROGRESS

**T**HE enemies to human progress are not the bad people but the "good" people. Humanity moves forward in a very curious way. We advance one step; then we bitterly attack those who would have us advance to the next step. "Good" people are those who stand for the existing order; they not only oppose those who break it (the criminals), but also those who would improve it (the reformers). A good church member is as hard toward a heretic as toward a sinner. The men who occupy the Present, with its convictions and organizations, fight front and rear, and repel the men of the Past and the men of the Future. Hence the progressive person is often classed with the criminal. "The same authority," says a recent writer, "which crucified two robbers at Golgotha stretched Jesus Christ on the middle cross between."

There is a modicum of truth in the charge that "advanced thinkers" are loosening morality. For the mass of men do not think at all, and take

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their opinions and their morals from existing institutions. Naturally, whoever intimates that these institutions are not perfect tends to confuse the average mind. And, naturally again, those in charge of the flock look askance at all progressives. Why can't things be let alone? The Pharisees thought Jesus was removing all law; the church believed Luther to be opening the way for every immorality.

If any man finds himself shunned because of his efforts to lead others to new heights, let him cheer up! The proverb runs, "The Good is the enemy of the Best." And of Christ it is written, "He was numbered with the transgressors."

## THE BENUMBING INFINITE

**A**NY thought about the infinite, and our relation to it, has a certain electrical quality that benumbs the mind, and acts upon it very much as a huge mass of iron deranges a compass. Every man is a little crazy in his religion or irreligion. It is as if any idea of so tremendous a thing as the universe and its Ruler, or our individual eternal destiny, were too strong liquor for mortal brains.

So there are few people save those of one's own sect with whom one can talk religion with rational calmness. When belief is mentioned each man retreats to his own peculiar cave, his own cyclone cellar he has dug to shelter himself from the confusion and terror of the Great Unknown. Safe there, he regards the world with a superior smile. Most minds are too small to entertain a religious conviction in the living room where it must jostle with common sense, and they, therefore, have a spare chamber where their faith can dwell in peace undisturbed by reason. To be

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thoroughly rational and thoroughly devout is not impossible, but it is rare.

Young Goethe wrote of certain good people he met in Strassburg as "Menschen von maessigem Verstanden, die mit der ersten Religionsempfindung auch den ersten vernunftigen Gedanken erhalten, und denken, das war alles, weil sie anders Nichts wissen — People of limited intelligence who had received along with their first religious impression also their first real thought, and believed that was all, because they knew nothing else."

## PUNISHMENT

**P**LUTARCH in his "De Sera Numinis Vindicta" declares that punishment does not so much follow upon injustice, but, as he finds in Hesiod, the two are of the same nature and spring from the same root. The world is going to learn some day a truth that now seems an absurdity — that all punishment is wrong and worse than useless. We are learning it in some degree. The slow progress of criminal law has been steadily away from cruel retaliation. But we have yet far to go. Any warden will tell you that the penitentiary never reformed a criminal. It makes many an ordinary man vicious. To hang, imprison or even fine a man for an offense is of the same grade as shooting a horse because he kicks us. In the coming state there will be no such thing as punishment. Society will learn to try and remedy its own blunders. The lawbreaker is diseased. It is our business to cure him and not, as in savage tribes, to beat him to drive out the devil. The criminal element of our country is in-

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creased and not decreased by legal punishments. Christ and Tolstoy are absolutely right. We pooh-pooh their method. Our great-grandchildren will adopt it.

## FORCE TILL RIGHT IS READY

**I** WONDER if those well-meaning persons who proclaim that one should "always do what is absolutely right" realize the utter impracticability of their preachment. As a matter of fact, I can act in accordance with the standards of perfect justice in only a very limited sphere of affairs, purely personal and individual. The moment I take my place in any of the world's institutions I become particeps criminis to a good deal of ancient and stubborn wrong. And the only way to make one's force felt in the world's work is through the world's institutions. In an imperfect society like ours whatever is practical is half unjust, else it would not be practical. Social conventions are how often cruel in certain instances! Yet society would tumble to chaos without these canons. The perfectly good laws of business work inequity sometimes, the established life of the church has hardened and repelled certain souls, and practical politics at its best has forced many a statesman into positions where his conscience made outcry.



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When the clear and rational mind analyzes any established law or custom it never fails to find plenty of old fraud. The world's sense of right as represented in its conventions grows slowly; the individual conscience is always far in advance. But that world-sense is tremendously more powerful, a vast tidal wave, as compared with the individual breaker. Matthew Arnold calls attention to the beautiful saying of Joubert: *C'est la force et le droit qui reglent toutes choses dans le monde; la force en attendant le droit* — Force and right are the governors of the world; force till right is ready."

## LIFE AND LITERATURE

**L**ITERATURE is intrinsically false. It may "hold the mirror up to life," but it is a cracked mirror, or warped. Novels have plots; in real life there is no plot, only an undramatic tangle. Plays have climaxes; in real life there is no climax, we go on living. Shakespeare had to kill Romeo and Juliet; think of their growing up into fat and stubborn Montagues and Capulets!

In books are characters; as a matter of fact we are none of us characters, but all sorts and kinds jumbled into one personality. Newspapers seek the unusual; but the unusual is not true; only the ordinary is true. The truth is not worth mentioning. As dust and other impurity gives color to the sunset, so lies and abnormalities are the beauty of letters.

Life is happy. Literature is tragic. As histories give a hundred pages to a day's battle and five lines to fifty years of peace so the daily journal, the romance and the drama are made up of the adventitious growths and by-products of

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life. The actual existence of a people finds no expression: the daily paper is a news bulletin of social disease.

We read too much. Get back to cows, trees and kittens, to the day's work and eating and sleeping, to earth and sky and water. There you will find that existence is a vast ocean of contentment, while literature is the sputter of its waves. When you try to translate life into literature, you meet the fate Emerson describes:

"I wiped away the weeds and foam,  
I fetched my sea-born treasures home;  
But the poor, unsightly, noisome things  
Had left their beauty on the shore,  
With the sun and the sand and the wild uproar."

## LOVE'S TRAGEDY

**O**NCE there was a man who loved a woman with all his strength. He took her to wife. They were poor. She washed, ironed, sewed and economized for him and grew to love him deeply. She bore him children. They were all very happy those days. Afterward he grew rich. He enjoyed his money because it enabled him to heap benefits upon her. As time went on her love gradually changed from her husband to her children. The more he sought her the more she withdrew. Only her children could awaken her tenderness, her sparkle and quickened pulse. Other women tried to tempt him, but he wanted only the woman he loved. So he consulted the Oracle, and the Oracle said:

“It is all quite simple. You do all the giving and she the receiving. The proverb, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive’ was not intended merely for missionary collections. It is a deep law of life. She loves the children because they are a constant drain upon her heart. She gives

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unceasingly to them; that feeds love. She takes from you; so love sickens."

"Then," said the man, "what shall I do? I want my wife. I cannot deny her. I cannot mistreat her. Tell me what to do."

And the Oracle replied: "You can do nothing. You cannot change your nature."

"Oh," exclaimed the man, "I feel like the devil."

"Quite the contrary," replied the Oracle, "for now you know how God feels."

## MODESTY

**W**HAT is the origin of modesty? How did the race ever come by the sentiment that certain things were shameful? I have a suspicion that the philosopher who shall solve this riddle will discover at the same time the core of religion. There seems to be some relation between the bodily sense of shame and the moral sense of sin. Unconscious innocence is not so lovely as the innocence that blushes. So love also is cousin to modesty and religion. It is a fundamental instinct of a human being to conceal life's arcana. And deep in the unfathomed heart of us lies the secret of the infinite. Life, love and God, these three things are of an utterly private nature. To touch them with the careless hand is like touching the eyeball. The oriental races naïvely expose their acts of worship; the Mussulman spreads his prayer rug in the market place, the Latin peoples of Southern Europe do their rites of worship with entire indifference to the bystander, while the Anglo-Saxon would be as ashamed of being caught

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saying his prayers as stealing apples. It is significant that the Anglo-Saxon's modesty rises to prudery and his reticence to gruffness. I have the feeling, but no proof, that we are nearest to the truth of the matter, and that somewhere in the dim region of the soul's darkness the converging lines of modesty, of love and of worship do meet at a common point.

## THE FRIENDLY UNIVERSE

**W**HEN we use the word Fate or Destiny we usually connote something gloomy and dread. Its picture to us is such as Arnold Boecklin might paint. When we speak of the Universe we have some such notion as Carlyle's Herr Teufelsdröckh had as he neared the nadir of The Everlasting No—"A huge, immeasurable Steam Engine, rolling on in its dead indifference to grind me limb from limb."

But this is all unjust and irrational. A man is never going to be genuinely content until he makes friends with the Universe. Destiny is kinder than Man. Fate is loving. Death is not a bony skeleton, heartless, with a scythe for all sweetness and light; Death is a mothering thing, with a feathered breast.

The reason I know this is that joy is the law of all conscious vitality. If Destiny were vicious life would mean pain. The pleasures of living infinitely outweigh the sorrows. We magnify evil. We dramatize calamity. Tragedy is



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news. And all the while the great ocean of humanity is happy in its deeps.

Whatever mind lurks behind the universe is a Father and not a Judge Jeffreys. If there be an all-seeing Eye, it is kindly, and not a huge, glaring detective eye. To me the Universe is a homy place, the stars are sociable, humanity is lovable and the grave is a resting bed where I shall go to sleep pillowed upon morning hopes.

## LOVE

**T**HERE is something in every man's heart, said Goethe, which, if we knew it, would make us hate him. Nothing gives such a shudder as to discover this strain of baseness in a friend. Sometimes we live for years in more or less intimate contact with a person only to find some fatal day his spot of inward cowardice. It is to conceal this little grain of coarseness that we maintain our reserve with all people. Society's conventions and formalisms preserve our mutual respect for one another by holding us a proper distance apart. Love is the only liquor that can render us insensible to the innate offensiveness that is in every personality. Therefore marriage, the closest relationship possible between human beings, is unbearable without love. But with love, sweetly blinding, transforming and coloring, the repulsive is glorified. If God were simply infinite wisdom He would spew the human race with its disgusting qualities out of His mouth; but He is infinite Love, and love has the eye that sees the winning wonder and secret beauty of all lives, even the worst. The devil knows us, but God loves us.

## THE TRUTH

**T**HE late O. Henry said that he longed to see a book that told the truth: everything in literature, he added, was posing, unreality, done to please somebody. But he wanted the impossible. We could no more endure naked truth than naked bodies. Our northern, heavily clothed civilization has developed morbidly sensitive skin, also morbidly sensitive selfhood. What a different thing the Greek self-consciousness must have been from ours. To a Pericles self meant a God-made torso and limbs; to the man of to-day self means a frock coat and trousers. I have a feeling that our race will never grow a right respect for truth, a worship and appreciation of the beauty of things as they are, until we outgrow the clothes habit. The curse of religion is respectability; of literature, decency; of thought, mob-dominancy. But what can you expect of people who are taught as children that to be real is to be naughty? It would take a thousand years of self-expression to cultivate a universal desire for truth. Books do not tell the truth because nobody would read them.

## OLD JOY

**T**HOSE dark ages, which we are used to think so wretched, when society, as Symonds says, existed upon a dung-heap, must after all have been happy, because there were so many walls, prisons and barriers to restrain happiness. And our twentieth century will certainly appear to the thirtieth century very unhappy, because we are so furious to stimulate happiness. Our literature teems with exhortations against the folly of worry and despair. In books, theaters, pulpits and schools we are continually crying, cheer up!

Human joy is very old. Mornings were steeped in dew and streams gurgled and trees waved and flowers nodded and the sun shone all about the children in the courtyard of Rameses and the young men and maids of Athens, and the pairing lovers in the days of Lorenzo the Magnificent. War, caste, religious bigotry, tyranny and ignorance could not dry up the streams of human zest in life.

Is not our age of dollars most perilous of all?  
Is not the God of Getting On the most Philistine  
of gods, sucking humanity dry?

## CHRISTMAS CHRISTIANITY

**T**HERE have been many varieties of Christianity since the day when Christ brought the original, genuine article to the world. But the very best kind of all is Christmas Christianity. The quintessence of the Christian religion is agreeableness. We have had all kinds of faith, orthodox and heretic, cave-dwelling, crusading, cathedral-building, protesting, conforming, plain and complicated, ritualistic and crude; and if you get confused and want to know what really the true faith is, an excellent plan is simply to try and make the people about you happy. I will not say that will save your soul, for I am not authorized to decide here upon so important a matter; but if causing joy and light in hearts near you be not a saving act and the essence of salvation, certain it is at least that such actions have the flavor and the odor of Heaven.

Once a year we leave the doubts and doctrines about Jesus and simply feel His personality. What a pity that we cannot take the Christmas feeling and butter it all over the dry year!

## TRUE LOVE

**A**LL the old English ballads sing, not of love, but of true love. It is monogamic fidelity that is singable. Doubtless men have enjoyed their harems and lady light-o'-loves have their pleasures. But that sort of thing never gets into the poetry of the people. "Douglas, Douglas, tender and true," is sung by every pair of turtle doves of honest mind. The rhapsodies of Thais, Lais and Sappho are nibbled in seclusion. The cause is not wholly the influence of Christianity. It is rather psychological. The highest type of affection is between two, and exclusive. Bulwer-Lytton says that to a man who truly loves a woman there is something a bit repellent or distasteful in any other woman. As loyalty is the highest flavor of love, so disloyalty brings to the heart its most terrible bitterness, a feeling like death. The best of all to a lover is not that he can bring that light into her face and that thrill into her blood, but that no other man can. Love, as a mere pleasure, palls; it is a brother to cruelty. Loyal love outlasts the fires of youth, warms old age, scorns death and endures in heaven.

## THE HUMAN TANGLE

**WE** are always overrating one another's mental clearness. We ascribe distinct motives where there is only confusion. All men are obscurest to themselves. "Why did he do such a thing?" Generally he has not the slightest idea. If he gives a clear reason it is probably one he thought of later. Most things are done "just because." The woman's reason is psychologically the truest. How many young persons marry, not from any wise and counseled plan, but in a bewilderment of passion and ignorance! The great decisions of humanity spring from obscure impulses. Logic, reason and the light come afterward and criticise. It is blind instinct that creates. The big universe is too much for us. Events are a tangle. Our own hearts are deep, holding strange monsters. The body may walk. The soul gropes. As we grow older we get toward God's point of view, as old Arkel, in Maeterlinck's "*Pelleas and Melisande*," said: "Si j'étais Dieu, j'aurais pitié du coeur des hommes — If I were God, I should have pity upon the heart of men."

## LUXURY AND DEMOCRACY

**H**UMANITY has never had splendor enough. The fault lies in that its glory has been based upon injustice. Kings and nobles feasted while peasants starved. Millionaires now live in luxury while workmen live in penury. But those who think that democracy will mean a dead level of commonplace are mistaken. There has been no magnificence in the world comparable to what will be the magnificence of the people, when once we get society upon the foundations of justice. We shall have parks vaster than any royal preserves, art galleries richer than any ducal collection, municipal theaters and concert gardens more costly and perfect than any millionaire group ever dreamed, besides food, drink and clothing more delightful than the past has ever known. Luxury, display, finery and all brave show need only be produced in terms of democracy and justice, and they cease to be wrong. Some day we shall beautify the whole city instead of merely the quarters of the rich.



## FACING THE DAY

**W**HAT we want to know about Socrates is not what he said upon such and such an occasion, but how he felt in the morning. How did he front life each day after his bath of death? It is not so important to know a man's evening opinion; it is a poor raveled affair after having been bandied about by the rough facts of a day. In the evening a man is expedient; in the morning he is heroic. Morning thoughts are primal, night thoughts are gray and steeped in confusion. The mind runs down; it must be dipped in death about once every twenty-four hours. In the morning you have the individual, at nightfall comes the institution, society, convention. Oh, for just one morning's intimacy with Wagner, with Dante, with Horace Bushnell, with Jesus! To know them, and not opinions about them! For a man is greater than anything he does, even as God is greater than His stars.

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